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Rev. W. A. Stearns.









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L I F E

AND

SELECT DISCOURSES

OF

REV. SAMUEL H. STEARNS.

BOSTON:

PUBLISHED BY JOSIAH A. STEARNS,

AND

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## P R E F A C E .

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THE account of the Life and Character of Mr. STEARNS has been extended beyond what was at first anticipated. Many of his letters, written in Europe, and copious extracts from his Note-Book for Italy, will be found incorporated with the memoir. It may not be necessary to apologize for the subject-matter or for the literary execution of them. But it should be remembered, that they were written with confidential and unstudied freedom, sketched, often in weariness and in haste, for the entertainment of friends, or to aid the author's own recollections of interesting scenes. From the very nature of the case, they could not be advantageously revised, even if any one had been disposed to attempt a revision. They are, therefore, given to the press, without correction, just as they were written ;—as a record of first impressions, fresh and warm from the heart.

In the choice of extracts from the Note-Book, the editor selected those passages which appear to have been written with the greatest fulness, and at the same time best illustrate the taste and peculiarities of their author. Even in these, some of the obscurer names of persons and places were so nearly illegible, from the haste and confusion with which

they were committed to paper, that inaccuracies of orthography may possibly be detected.

Mr. Stearns wrote his sermons after much reflection. But none of them were considered by him as finished, none of them had been revised, and prepared for publication. They were written, not to be read, but to be delivered, not for the scrutiny of critics, but for the ear and heart of men whose eternal interests are at stake. Had they gone to the press under the watchful eye of their author, perhaps some passages would have been erased, new matter might in some instances have been introduced, and the whole would doubtless have been shaped and fashioned with laborious exactness. But since the only individual who was authorized to modify them is no more, it is thought best to submit them to the public just as they stood in the manuscripts, and rather hazard the possibility of slight inaccuracies, than attempt to correct or alter them.

One word as to the arrangement of the Sermons as they appear in the present volume. The first two were preached in the Old South Church, by Mr. Stearns, the first Sabbath after his ordination. The third discourse is the last which he preached to his people,—the last that he ever preached. The fourth is a fragment. It was intended as a farewell sermon,—but his health proved in the event insufficient to deliver or complete it. The remaining discourses are arranged with some reference to subjects, rather than to local circumstances, or to the order in which they were written.

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LIFE AND CHARACTER  
OF  
REV. SAMUEL H. STEARNS.

*By William Augustus Stearns.*

CHAPTER I.

HIS PARENTAGE—EARLY EDUCATION—AND PIETY.

FRIENDSHIP derives a melancholy satisfaction from the faithful *portraits* of those who were loved and respected while living. But as these are only resemblances of features which have lost their expression, and their interest, except as a remembered good, the feelings of intelligent survivors are much more gratified with an exhibition of that which cannot die,—the character—the mind.

When that mind is of a high order, and possessing marked and pleasing characteristics, has been enriched by study, and has brought genius, judgment and learning to the examination of important subjects, the world are in some degree losers, unless its lineaments are sketched and the fruits of its powers preserved.

In presenting this volume of Discourses, with brief reminiscences of their author, a higher consideration than either of those suggested bears sway. The deceased fell at the very

threshold of his profession, the message on his lip undelivered, the errand untold, the great work, to which from childhood he had devoted his life, scarcely begun. The living voice can express truth and emotion no more! But being dead, thou shalt yet speak, my brother, from the silent page, and realize, it may be, the prayer of thy youth, thy manhood, and of *thy latest days*, "to be useful for a *little season* in the world."

SAMUEL HORATIO STEARNS was born at Bedford, Mass., September 12th, 1801. He was the eldest son and second child that survived infancy, of Rev. Samuel Stearns, who was for more than thirty-nine years pastor of the church in that place. His grandparents were Rev. Josiah Stearns, of Epping, N. H., and Rev. Jonathan French, of Andover, Mass.

Samuel was constitutionally feeble, and on this account, was an object of parental solicitude, from his cradle to his tomb. In boyhood, however, when shielded from exposures, and cherished by a mother's love, though subject to frequent and sudden illnesses, he enjoyed for the most part comfortable health.

At this period, though marked by gravity and thoughtfulness, he was playful and very happy. While he had no sympathy with coarse merriment and profaneness, he engaged in the studies adapted to his years, and in those sports which were allowed, with all his soul. "The first ten years of my life," he used to say, "were perfectly blissful."

Between the age of ten and fifteen, he spent most of the time at home, under the immediate care and instruction of his

parents. At this period, his mother, always the companion, rather than the governess of her children, spared no pains to inspire his young heart with just and honorable emotions,—to elevate his mind above the seductive influence of evil companions,—to fill his head with arguments and pithy answers, for those, by whom the principles in which he was educated might be assailed,—and, *without seeming to do it*, to give him that thirst for knowledge and for elevating pursuits, on which all eminence, that is worthy of the name, so much depends. These attentions he repaid by uniform confidence, obedience, respect, affection and general improvement.

At this age, he was taught, by easy, but regular tasks, with alternate studies, to labor upon the soil and direct the affairs of a farm ; it being a favorite doctrine of his father's, that, as common sense is not often gathered from books alone, "no boy is fit for college, till he knows how to work." Here also, in the performance of these tasks, he acquired those habits of faithfulness and thoroughness, which were ever after among the prominent features of his character. He used to say, that the manner in which he was taught by his father "to weed the garden," had influenced him, in all his studies in after life. The maxim was, "a thing once well done is twice done," and the rule was, "leave no weed, my son, *as big as a pin*." The importance of this direction was, usually, in the course of the season, demonstrated. The work, if faithfully performed in early summer, was accomplished, very nearly, for the year.

When about fourteen years old, Samuel began to manifest a growing desire to obtain a liberal education and devote himself to the duties of professional life. He accordingly commenced the study of Latin, under the direction of his father, whose

reiterated precept, '*go thorough*, enforced as it was by his own example in every thing, laid the foundation of future classical success.

What his religious feelings at this time were, we have no definite knowledge. But his respect for the Sabbath, his diligent study of the Bible, and his uniform seriousness,—together with a wish, earnestly expressed, to consecrate his life to the Christian ministry, induce the belief, that he was not far from the kingdom of heaven.

In December, 1816, being a little more than fifteen years of age, he entered Phillips Academy, in Andover. Under the genial influences of that institution, which, for its exalted morality and piety, as well as for its thoroughness in the first principles of classical knowledge, is perhaps surpassed by no other in the United States, the seeds of religion which had been sown in childhood, and had begun to germinate at home, sprung up to view. He thought deeply upon his spiritual condition, and felt himself a lost sinner in the sight of God. After much heart-searching and self-humiliation, with intervals of despondency, he expressed his feelings, without reserve, to some confidential Christian friends, who, by directing his mind to the characteristics of experimental piety, inspired him with a trembling confidence that his sins were forgiven.

Being encouraged by his parents, who had long watched and scrutinized his character, and who thought that those lambs of the flock which bear the good Shepherd's mark, are safest in the fold, Samuel, now in his sixteenth year, made a public profession of his faith in Christ, at Bedford, and was received a member, in full communion, of the church in that place, June 1st, 1817.

It was a day of great interest both to the parent and the child, and to all who witnessed the scene. This son, from the earliest dawn of his life, had been consecrated to the service of Christ and the church, in the ministry. He had been publicly baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. He was considered by his parents as one *marked* for the Lord. This too, was the first of a large family set apart by public and by private covenants for God, whom the Saviour seemed manifestly to own. This then, appeared to them as a voice from heaven, saying, "Thy prayer is heard;"—an occasion of that interest which none but Christian parents can fully understand.

Never will the surviving children of that family forget the emotions which swelled their hearts, as this brother stood forth in the congregation, a frail child, almost overpowered by the scene, and, "in the presence of God, the holy angels and of that assembly," made his everlasting covenant with Heaven. Never will they forget the impression produced on their minds, by a few words of direct address from the father to the son, near the close of his discourse that afternoon.

"Some of you are coming forward in early life, much younger than has been usual in this place, younger than any one for more than twenty years past, probably younger than any one for a much longer period. While I tremble through fear of the event, in view of the numerous and powerful temptations to which I know your youthful age will expose you, from gratitude to God, by whose grace I charitably hope you have been drawn to Christ while thus young, I am constrained to say, I view this among the happiest days of my life,—far more so than to have seen you an heir to the wealth

of the Indies, or the splendor of an earthly crown. O, my son, let God have the empire of your heart, for it is his just due. Let Christ have the devotion and service of your life, for he it is who died for you, and by whose grace alone your life is worth possessing. May the Spirit of God enlighten and sanctify and keep you,—and may you obtain favor of the Lord to be faithful and to glorify him, with that holiness which becometh his children for ever!”

When the solemnities were over, Samuel returned home to to his private apartment, overwhelmed and bowed down with emotion. From this period, he sustained an unblemished and uniform Christian character, and is believed, amidst all the temptations of after life, to have “walked worthy the vocation wherewith he was called.”

June 19th, 1817, he thus writes to his parents from Andover: “I did fondly hope to hear that the Spirit of the Lord had overspread the town, and that many hardened and stupid sinners had been led to cry out, in the language of the publican—and that many had escaped from the *awful precipice* on which they stood, and fled to the ark of safety for refuge. But nothing of this reaches my ears, and I fear that the sun which appeared to be rising so pleasantly upon you has become enveloped in a cloud. If this be indeed the case, O that it might again break forth, with more lustre than ever!

“Please give my love to all my brothers and sisters, and tell them from me, that heaven *is* worth obtaining,—eternal happiness *is* worth striving for, and *now* is the golden season.”

Sept. 12, 1817, he writes, “This day terminates the sixteenth year of my life. Much, very much do I owe to that fostering hand, and that parental care, which have watched



over me, often with anxious days and sleepless nights, and been instrumental in preserving my life. When I review my past years, and consider the *many* dangers from which I have been preserved, even from infancy, well may I exclaim, Wherefore have I been continued in the world so long? But alas! these years are gone, like 'a tale that is told.' How much longer I have to remain in the flesh, through what troubles and trials to pass, and for what purpose, God alone can tell. O, that I may so spend the remainder of my days, that if death comes sooner or later, I may meet it with composure, and be transported to that world where sin and sorrow never come."

Jan. 7th, 1819, he writes to his eldest sister, who was not supposed at that time to possess the consolations of religion, but who has since, after many years of humility in the church of Christ, been gathered, long before this brother, in the joy of faith, to her rest in heaven :

"MY DEAR SISTER,

"I recollect when I was at home in vacation, speaking of your birth-day, you said that on that day I must write you a letter. It is, therefore, in compliance with your request, that I embrace the present opportunity to address you, in a manner which I hope will be for your good, and our mutual benefit. And, my sister, let me open my mind freely to you, on that most important of all subjects, the great end for which we live. Well does it become you, at such a period as this, especially, to look back on your past life, to examine yourself and consider, wherefore it is that you live. This day completes the nineteenth year of your existence. The Lord has dealt bountifully with you. He has given you life. He has

placed you in a Christian land. He has given you pious parents to instruct you, to pray with and for you, to nourish and comfort you, from the cradle to the present time. Here then, you may well exclaim, Bless the Lord O my soul !

“ But, dear sister, remember you were placed here for some great end ; you are placed on probation for *eternity*. When a few more suns shall have risen and set, when a few more revolving years shall have passed away, you must appear before your Judge, to receive a reward, according to your deeds, whether they be good or evil.

“ Dear sister, let me seriously and affectionately put this question, Are you prepared for this great event ? Have you made your peace with God ? Do you *feel* peace and joy in believing ? If so, *happy* are you,—God is your portion, Christ is your Redeemer, and heaven with all its glory, shall be yours, and yours for ever. But if, on the other hand, you have no good hope that you have been ‘born again,’ with trembling and heartfelt solicitude, I beseech you consider, ere it be too late ! How long, my sister, will you ‘halt between two opinions ?’ If religion be all-important, as I have no doubt your understanding says it is, why not embrace it *now* ? I venture to say, *now* is the *very best time*, perhaps the only time. Religion is not calculated to make men gloomy, to make their comforts less. No, my sister, it sweetens the bitter cup, and heightens all our joys. Do then consider of these things ; embrace the Saviour to-day, even while he is offered, and he *will* receive you. O what holy joy would it enkindle in our dear parents’ bosoms, could they feel that you were devoted to God ! Give yourself away to him, boldly profess his name before a sinful world, and walk in his ordinances blame-

less. Then when you shall have done with all things here below, you shall be received to join the angelic host, in songs of praise for ever. That this may be the happy case with you and me, and all our dear friends, is the daily prayer of your affectionate brother,

"SAMUEL H. STEARNS."

## CHAPTER II.

## HIS COLLEGE LIFE.

IN the autumn of 1819, Mr. Stearns was admitted to the freshman class, in Harvard university. The choice of a college had been a subject of long and anxious solicitude, both to the parents and the son. Their predilections were all in favor of Harvard, but many circumstances led them to hesitate, and finally to decide, with trembling. This decision, made as it was in view of the character of the individual, the past history of Harvard, and its present preëminent advantages, neither of them had occasion afterward, it is thought, for a moment to regret.

At this time, there was nothing very remarkable, certainly nothing precocious, in the intellectual development of the young student. He was diffident and unambitious, but moderately diligent and faithful to his tasks. With a slow but certain progress, he would have been satisfied, had it not been for the fact, which now appeared full in his view, that upon *superior scholarship*, his very existence as a student at the university, must depend. His father's circumstances were at this time so much straitened, that, notwithstanding important aid from the American Education Society, the expenses of college life could not be sustained. He must either quit his post and sacrifice his prospects, or obtain assistance from the funds of the university. But in distributing the funds appropriated to indigent students, respect is had, very properly, to

the *attainments* of the individual, as well as to his needs. It is not strange, therefore, that a young student, invited by a natural love of study, and urged on by the necessities of the case, but inexperienced as to the consequences of incessant application, should be tempted to overdo, or that the mind, stimulated by its own efforts, and inspired by unexpected success, should continue to press forward, till the delicate fabric which sheltered it was worn out and broken down. This was literally the case, in the present instance. Exercise was thought unimportant and relaxation an unnecessary indulgence. Hours of sleep were trespassed upon,—and the excited mind, looking onward and upward, was allowed no rest. The cheek grew deadly pale, as it hung, all day long and late in the evening, over its desk. But, cheered with the thought, that filial duty and the glory of God required this exertion, the altered hue of the countenance was unheeded, till within sight of the goal, exhausted nature crippled and fell.

Early in the spring of 1821, in his junior year, Mr. Stearns was obliged to leave college for the recovery of his health. For several weeks he continued to fail, and to exhibit threatening symptoms of decline. During all the summer, parental love watched over his emaciated frame and desponding spirits, with ceaseless anxiety. But, through the unexpected blessing of God, he so far recovered from his illness, that in the coming autumn he ventured to return to the university.

Oct. 1, 1821, he thus writes to his father: "I called Saturday afternoon on Prof. H——, and gave him your letter. He said he should like some time to examine me a little in logic,—said, also, that I cannot maintain my former standing as a scholar, without making up the studies in his department,

and also the mathematics, and advised me by no means to take a school next winter. I told him I thought it *necessary*, and made known to him more fully my circumstances. An insupportable burden is upon me. My health is extremely slender,—a very little extraordinary exertion produces such a pain in my side and chest, and such a fluttering of the heart, as unfits me for any duty. To keep along, in my present state, is a great undertaking, without the disadvantages of absence a whole term, and the necessity of making up lost time. It seems, then, that I must give up my present class entirely, or lose my college standing and college assistance, or else drag along with all this accumulated weight, and most probably sink in the effort. Either of these is a disappointment, which nothing but absolute necessity would induce me to suffer. I am indeed ‘come to Marah,’ and long for the tree which shall sweeten its bitter waters. What God designs for me, he only can tell,—doubtless it will be accomplished. But to lose my health, lose my standing and support, my honors and spirits, is so incompatible with my former prospects and high expectations, that I cannot endure it. Sometimes my *feelings* prompt me to risk the consequences,—do with my might, till the power of doing is gone, and then submit. But *reason* bids me forbear, and yet the voice of duty speaks to me, ‘that I go *forward*.’ O, for wisdom to direct!”

Arrangements were made, whereby the invalid might avoid the exhausting labors of school-teaching that winter. The coming vacation, therefore, was devoted to the redeeming of lost time. This was the only year of his college life, which was not interrupted, by many weeks’ absence, in an employment which is quite as trying to the powers of a delicate con-

stitution, as any, perhaps, they are called to sustain. To the student who is already worn down with excessive exertion, and needs relaxation, instead of taking upon himself an increased burden, it is often almost *suicidal*.

Whether it is wise, for an undergraduate in college to turn aside from his appropriate duties, several weeks yearly, for the small gains and severe labors of a country school, may be seriously doubted. Necessity sometimes demands the interruption. But the disadvantages to a student, whose class is going forward in his absence, is often incalculable. His habits of study are disturbed; his purposes of eminence are often unsettled. He resumes his tasks with pain, and as he stands among his companions, in conscious mortification that he has been *distanced* by them all, he either falters with discouragement, or resolves to rush forward, and, at any sacrifice, to redeem his lost time. But that time cannot be redeemed. It is *lost*, and to most it is lost irrecoverably.

In the present instance, life, perhaps, was depending upon a relief from the accustomed interruption. This relief gave encouragement and a spring to the mind, and enabled it to accomplish the tasks which had been accumulating through the season. Still, Mr. Stearns was an invalid student, borne on by the current of his own feelings, by the necessities of his circumstances, and by a strong sense of duty, to the hazard of life.

March 1, 1822, he writes: "I have this term taken every precaution and used every means to preserve my health. I have been very attentive to diet and exercise. But after all as spring returns, I find myself losing ground. If it were freshman or sophomore year, I should be quite unable to

prepare myself in the exercises, and go through with the duties of college life. At present, the studies are easy and the lectures interesting, but I am not able to read and improve my mind as I wish. Government seem ready to make every allowance and grant every indulgence, but I fear I shall weary out their patience.

"In all this affliction, I console myself with the idea, that I have pursued the course of life marked out by Providence, and if disappointed here, I seek to resign myself cheerfully to his will. Having repeatedly examined, and sought to know the true state of my mind, I am led to think, that my prevailing desire is to *know what is duty*, and follow where it leads, regardless of consequences."

Possibly the maxim, "follow where duty leads, *regardless of consequences*," so good in itself, but so liable to *misapplication*, may have contributed to this impaired health and consequent suffering. He did not then perhaps consider, what he in after life so fully understood, that known or expected consequences must often influence our decisions of duty. That constancy and intenseness of application, which is right for those who have reason to think that they can endure it, may be wrong in others, who are certain or fearful that such exertion will be to the permanent injury of health.

Mr. Stearns, in all his trials, possessed the spirit of Christian resignation, and sustained his broken constitution with the belief, that all the providences of God were wisely ordered, and would work for the best. Still, his heart would sink at times in despondency ; and he found it difficult to gird himself up to those employments in which he had been so often disappointed.



His feelings are thus expressed to a brother who was engaged in the preparatory studies of college, at Phillips Academy :

“ You have one inestimable blessing that I *never* knew, and now know less than ever,—sound and vigorous health. I rejoice with you, that you can ply your books and urge your studies, without those constant pains which tell me every moment, ‘not so fast,’ and without that extreme debility which limits my exertions and stands an insurmountable barrier against every noble undertaking.”

Although Mr. Stearns’s spirits were clouded, and his heart saddened by ill health, he was not generally so despondent as some of these extracts seem to indicate. His humor was naturally playful,—and his trust in Providence threw a pleasing light upon his clouds. Affliction enlivened his sympathies, deepened his religious feelings, and increased his anxieties for the spiritual welfare of his friends, but did not render him permanently sad.

The following letter is a specimen of his familiar correspondence, and shows how naturally his heart used to rise from the sprightliness of the domestic circle, to themes of loftier interest :

“BEDFORD, March 18th, 1823.

“BROTHER \_\_\_\_\_,

“I came home on Saturday last to visit my friends. In casting a look upon them all, I cannot but notice the absence of one, whom I hold dear as my own soul, and recollect with all the interesting associations of boyish sport and youthful pastime. Amidst the social pleasures of a father’s family, I feel a void which all of these cannot fill. Believe

me, I am urged by the impulse of affection, to seek silent converse, even amid the buzz and chat of our family circle, which you can more easily conceive than I describe. Just at this moment, they have assailed me with their united forces, and filled my ears with *ward-shot*, from every quarter. Aunt P——, made signal, and C——, gave the word of command. All was confusion,—but the battle is almost hushed again, and I resume my work. To give you a little sketch of my situation,—mother dignifies the maternal chair, and seems, by her look and words, to possess a station equally honorable and far more happy, than that of Elizabeth, with the throne of England for her seat, instead of a rocking-chair,—the precarious sceptre of a proud nation, instead of *knitting-work*,—announcing law to a restless and ambitious people, instead of imparting advice and giving a tone to the innocent merriment of her own dear children. But no more prosing. A—— and C—— are . . . and cracking jokes, and, with sparkling eyes, talking of *beaux*. Aunt R—— maintains her gravity, and seems to indulge in speculation upon the various scenes. Aunt P—— occupies the centre of the circle on my right, and now resting from her work, leans on my knee ;—now and then, an anecdote from her adds to our entertainment,—and, to be sure, I can hardly help laughing myself, occasionally. E—— sits next, *very sedate* ; M—— fills the arm-chair in the corner, and every few minutes expresses a wonder what I am writing about. But to tell you all that is said is too great a task,—and the result would be like a *mince-pie*,—some plums, some apple, some short crust,—some sweet, little meat, and the whole, though very pleasing to the taste for the moment, not permanently wholesome.

"I heartily wish I had something of more importance to relate. But in matters of real seriousness, of vital interest, I am wholly at a loss. Notwithstanding the exertions of a few Christians, and especially of our dear father, whose labors are more and more abundant, and whose zeal is more and more ardent, all here is cold, dull and dreary as the house of death. Professing Christians have apparently too little of the spirit of their Master. O, my brother, I must believe that Christians are awfully guilty in this respect. God has pledged his word that he will answer fervent, importunate prayer. Yes, if we could but pray in sincerity, with right affections and with unwavering faith, this house might become a Bethel and this town 'a dwelling-place of righteousness.' *Pray* then, for us,—pray for *me*, and pray for our college,—our friends and the world. God *will* hear prayer."

His anxiety for the spiritual welfare of his sisters, brothers and other friends, was always apparent; and a confidence in prayer, for the conversion of his fellow-beings, was characteristic of his early, as well as his maturer piety.

April 1, 1823, he writes from Harvard university: "Your report from N—— is truly reviving; would to God we might hear a similar one from our own dear family. I was at home a short time since and spent several days. The most encouraging religious symptom was, the persevering and increased engagedness of our inestimable parents. The family exercises of Saturday and Sabbath evenings were solemn and delightful. The return of these seasons has ever since brought a return of similar feelings. O, my brother, we do not sufficiently appreciate the worth of pious parents,—the benefit of their prayers;—probably it is in a great measure

in answer to them, that we receive the blessings we enjoy,—and especially the unspeakable blessing of peace with God, if indeed we have true peace.

“ I have ‘ great heaviness for my brethren and kindred according to the flesh.’ I sometimes feel that I would make any sacrifice, and exert my feeble powers to the utmost in their behalf, to warn them to ‘ flee from the wrath to come,’ and to throw themselves, without reserve, into the arms of Christ who is waiting *now* to receive them. But they have knowledge of their duty and of their present condition,—they have call upon call, ‘ line upon line, and precept upon precept.’ *We* may avail most in prayer for them,—and thus I unburthen my heart. I can say to *you*, that I have felt of late uncommon interest at the throne of grace on their behalf. I do *believe* that the God of grace is about to appear for *them*. I believe with *trembling*,—Lord, help thou my unbelief! *Do pray* for them,—and pray for a blessing on all your exertions,—pray for me,—God will hear prayer;—pray *for us*. Our sacred motto, ‘ Christo et Ecclesiæ,’ will ere-long wave on our banner, in holy triumph over this birth-place of our fathers, and gladden the hearts of their praying sons.”

Mr. Stearns felt a deep interest in Harvard college, as the concluding sentence of the extract just given indicates. He venerated, he loved, that institution with filial affection. Painfully sensible of what he conceived to be its errors in Christian doctrine, he could not fail to appreciate its thorough course of literary and scientific studies, its numerous and superior lectures, its large and invaluable library, its intellectual and classic atmosphere, and, opinion to the contrary notwithstanding, its general standard of morality which, it is thought,

would suffer much less in comparison, with the other colleges of New England, than is sometimes imagined. He looked upon it as the noble offspring of the Pilgrims, consecrated by many a prayer to the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom, and designed by God to afford important aid in accomplishing the destinies of the New World, and sooner or later, in rolling the wave of salvation, by a crucified Saviour, over the Old.

July 14th, 1823, just before he graduated, he writes to a brother, who at that moment was in great doubt as to the choice of a college, but afterwards entered Harvard: "O, how pleasant it would be, if I might indulge the hope that ——— was coming here, to take my place with my books, furniture and every little article of convenience, &c. How much more pleasure I should take in visiting this seat of learning, the first-born of our enlightened and pious forefathers,—the mother of almost all their worthy posterity,—the nursery of *our own fathers*,—the object of their kindest regard,—of their warmest gratitude,—of their highest veneration,—of their most fervent, importunate and acceptable prayers. Yes, I can remember when our venerable and pious grandparent, in his *daily* devotions, poured forth the most earnest supplications in behalf of the 'university in our vicinity, founded by the early Pilgrims, and consecrated to the American church.' I will only add, God bless the sons of Harvard, and preserve our alma mater from the open attacks of enemies,—the secret treachery of hypocritical friends, and from the baleful influence of every wrong principle to be found in her own heart."

Mr. Stearns was much tried while a member of college, as to the duties which he owed, *relatively*, to himself, to his

fellow-students, and to the officers of the institution. [According to sentiments of honor which prevail in every generous breast, he despised the meanness of those who seek preferment, by the wilful exposure of another's faults. At the same time, neither his self-respect nor his principles of religion would allow him to shield himself or his friends, by the greater meanness of equivocation and untruth.] The maxim of conduct which he chose was, *never to stoop, in any emergency, to falsehood*, but always to save the character of his associates, when he could do it, without contravening his conscience. { He revered, in students as well as in citizens, that manly independence which respects itself as a being accountable chiefly to God, but he looked upon the bravadoes of assumed consequence, and the miserable ambition of notoriety in wickedness as beneath his contempt. It was a principle with him, while a member of the university, that a college rebellion *is never wise or right*. If the laws of an institution, or the executors of those laws, he argued, become so oppressive that I can no longer submit to them, let me, honorably, withdraw from their authority, and seek to correct abuses and redress grievances, by such means as the members of a free community, in common enjoy. But let me not, recklessly, resist "the powers that be," or without counting the cost, commence a controversy, in which order and discipline must triumph, and discomfiture and mortification to myself will certainly ensue. }

Though a member of the university, at a time of unusual commotion, he passed its ordeal without censure, and without injury to his morals or to his Christian character. He was known as a professor of religion, a full believer in the doctrines

of the cross ;—as such his sentiments were treated with delicacy, and his habits of devotion and rigid adherence to principle, with respect.

Mr. Stearns graduated at Harvard college in August, 1823. The part assigned him, in the exercises of commencement, and which he performed, was the salutatory addresses in Latin. On taking his second degree, three years after, he delivered the master's valedictory oration in Latin.

## CHAPTER III.

HIS CONNECTION WITH PHILLIPS ACADEMY, AS AN INSTRUCTOR—  
EFFORTS TO REGAIN AND CONFIRM HEALTH BY MANUAL LABOR—  
PROFESSIONAL STUDIES.

AFTER leaving college, Mr. Stearns spent a few weeks in recruiting his exhausted powers, and then took a situation, as an instructor in Phillips Academy, at Andover. In this employment he continued, with some interruptions, till the spring of 1825. But the severe though pleasing duties of his station had so far consumed his physical energies, that he was, decidedly, unfit to enter upon his professional studies. A portentous cloud hung over his prospects of usefulness. He had devoted himself to the service of Christ, in the gospel ministry. He had been steadily looking forward to this work, from early childhood. His studies had been chosen, his observations made, and his habits of thought formed, in reference to it. Nor could he consider it his duty to relinquish all hope of attaining a profession, whose sacred employments seemed to him as desirable as life, without an effort to repair his broken constitution. Under these circumstances, he determined to spend the coming season, in those rural occupations, which had been among the delights as well as appointed tasks of his childhood. His plan was to commence his course of physical discipline with the opening of spring,—to begin very *moderately*, and by continued practice, acquire strength for effective labor. Many of his friends were doubtful as to the success of this project. Still, as he was encouraged to it by distinguished physicians, and as his own inclinations were strong in its favor,



they did not advise decidedly against the experiment. His own views, on the subject, were thus given :

“ This course seems to me the only probable means Providence is affording me, of restoring that comfortable degree of health, of which I have long been deprived, but once enjoyed, and which, with the blessing of my heavenly Father, I hope again to enjoy and improve to his glory. Since my health first broke down,—now almost four years,—such an opportunity, as the present, has not been afforded. When I shall once have commenced the study of my profession at a public institution, my situation will be much like that at college. It will be almost as difficult to break off, and the loss, of course, as much to be deprecated. My friends premonish me that my plan demands a great deal of fortitude and resolution. Time must prove, whether or not, I can boast ‘a quantum sufficit.’ Besides all this; I anticipate many misgivings, in my own mind, and perchance, in my lowly moods, occasional repentance for the course I pursue. Yet, strange as it may seem, to my mind, the path is comparatively clear and plain, —‘ duty calls,—’t is mine to obey.’ I have taken my resolution. I wish to be decided, and feel so ; a fickle disposition is always disreputable, and utterly destructive of one’s usefulness.”

According to this plan, the spring, summer and autumn of 1825 were spent at Bedford. By daily physical labor, alternated with studies of a tasteful and pleasing kind, this effort to regain health was partially successful. The spirits recovered something of their buoyancy, and the mind, disburthened of its anxieties and left to its own free musings, gained as much, perhaps, by untrammelled and unforced movements, as, under

all the circumstances, it would have done by the severest and most formal application.

In December of 1825, Mr. Stearns joined the junior class, in the theological seminary, at Andover.

Having been cradled and educated in the midst of clerical society, and having been in the habit of investigating theological subjects, under the superintendence of his father, from early youth, his time was now very much at his command. The prescribed duties of the seminary were faithfully and formally attended to, as far as health would allow; but, beyond this, opportunity was afforded for general reading, and for patient and thorough examination of the more important passages of Scripture and principles of religion. He followed the method of investigation which was best adapted to his own mind. He rarely read through a continuous treatise; he studied *subjects*, not *books*. Instead of wandering abroad in the wildernesses of theological and philosophical systems, he fixed his attention upon particular points, and, while he possessed himself of the knowledge which the learned had gathered round them, his principal dependence, in the discovery of truth, was upon his own steadfast and long continued meditations. In these, he was often absorbed for many days together, —making little use of books, except for occasional reference in matters of fact. And though his mind was sometimes oppressed by the perplexities of a subject, he would rarely give over, till he thought he could thread its intricate paths, or discover that to man, in his present state, they were impervious. The doctrine of divine purposes took hold of his attention, at one time, with exclusive and unrelaxing power. For several months, its mysteries hung like a dark cloud around him, and

for a little season, it was only by faith that he could see the smile of paternal love shining through. "These are subjects," he says, "which try men's souls:"

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"we reason high  
Of Providence and fate, will, foreknowledge:  
Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,  
And find no end, in wandering mazes lost."

"Never has my mind been so severely tried. But I have confidence in study and divine help, that I shall see out. Indeed, I think that I can discover the light, though it shines only at a distance, and invites me out of this dark bewildering swamp. I believe the result of my inquiries, if successful, will be to know our ignorance, *necessary ignorance*."

Other subjects in their turn occupied his attention, with similar exclusiveness. When his predilections for any sentiment were peculiarly strong, he kept his judgment balanced, by the more thorough consideration of objections, and by prayer.

During these three happy years of professional preparation, he had made no ordinary attainments in the science and in the belles-lettres of theology. On prominent doctrinal principles, his opinions had become clear and well established. He had formed and sketched for himself an ideal of the Christian minister, pastor and man. He had spent much time in determining the mode of address which becomes the pulpit, and the more private relations of the sacred office; and was fully possessed with the sentiment, that the preacher's business is to *adapt* and *impress* truth. He considered, therefore, that next to discriminating views of doctrine and duty, sacred rhetoric, using that term in its largest sense, is a study of prin-

cial importance, in preparation for the ministry. The mode of unfolding and exhibiting God's truth was, consequently, a favorite and prominent subject of his studies.

Being now well furnished, in the opinion of others, if not in his own, for his great work, an inquiry of anxious interest was presented to his mind. This is an age of Christian benevolence; the children of God are expected to withhold no sacrifice of personal feeling from the cause of their Master. Educated for the sacred profession, they must choose their field of labor, with no reference to worldly advantage. The question is not, where can I secure to myself indulgence from labor, literary leisure, cultivated society, and a prospect of personal distinction; but where can I *best* subserve the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom? In North America or in Japan? Among the graves of my fathers, or in the distant islands of the Pacific seas? This question comes distinctly before the mind of every young clergyman whose heart is, in any respect, worthy of the sacred profession, and demands a decided, a disinterested answer.

This subject, Mr. Stearns was now urged, by the impulses of his own soul, to investigate. One would suppose that, in a case like the present, there could be little difficulty, in determining the path of duty. On the one hand, his physical disabilities were an insuperable objection to his becoming a missionary;—on the other, his habits, his tastes, his education, his very nature, fitted him to be chiefly useful among the cultivated of his own countrymen. But the question, in his mind, could not be so easily settled.

"There is this year," he writes to his parents, "an unusual call for missionaries, domestic and foreign. The American

Board wish to employ as many as twenty, in addition to those now in their service. The unexampled liberality of laymen, during this year, calls for corresponding efforts on the part of clergymen. The Board say, we must enlarge our operations and send out more missionaries. They intend to establish at least two or three new stations, and to reinforce the old ones. I believe their statements and plans are given, *in general*, in the *Missionary Herald*. But the Home Missionary Society are still louder in their calls. They would be glad to employ a *hundred* additional laborers, and say they should find no difficulty in obtaining the *means*, if they could get the *men*. They would send some to the South, but most to the West:—to Ohio,—and to important stations in other States,—to St. Louis, in Missouri,—to Natchez, and to New Orleans. They are about to establish a printing office in St. Louis, and a religious newspaper. Mr. B——, one of my class-mates, will probably take the editorial charge of it. Rev. Mr. —— of New York, was here last week, as an agent for the Society, and plead hard for missionaries. Western missions, in a *political* point of view, as well as moral and religious, are most important. If that western country is not *christianized* soon, where will be the boasted liberty which Puritans purchased with their prayers, their tears, and their blood! Now, we have but nineteen or twenty men in our class to supply this great demand. We talk now, as if about one third of these would go on foreign missions, and one third or more on domestic, *i. e.*, western missions. But the most important question for *me* is, what is *my* duty? I have talked with Dr. Porter about it, and he gave me no explicit advice, but said, that he thought, I could not and ought not to make up my

mind, just yet, either way, and referred me to you. Will you and mother have the goodness to think on this subject, and be ready to give me your opinions, when I come home, with your *reasons*? Where can I do most good, *on the whole*? Meanwhile, let the promise, 'If any man lack wisdom,' &c., sustain us."

The following resolutions, written just before he left the seminary, have been found among his loose papers, since his decease :

"I wholly renounce ambition and self-indulgence, as motives of action.

"I must be absolutely and entirely devoted to God, in heart and life ; and live not unto myself, but unto him who loved me and died for me.

"I must glorify God, in the improvement of my own character, and in doing good to mankind.

"I will follow my own taste and genius, so far as circumstances allow ; and trust in God that his providence will guide me. 'Trust in the Lord,' &c. 'Be careful for nothing.'

"I will never intrude myself upon the public, or take a conspicuous part, without good and important reasons ; nor will I shrink from the exposure when duty calls, but generously go forward, and endeavor to acquit myself with Christian propriety.

"My intercourse with the world, as far as it extends, shall be perfectly honorable, Christian, frank, kind and magnanimous ;—any good attained or done at the expense of this, costs too much.

"It shall be my pleasure to exert a happy influence on all within the little circle in which I move.

"I will never be disturbed or diverted from my purpose by the remarks, conduct and opinions of those who do not know my character or understand my motives ; but will ever maintain that self-possession, freedom, independence and liberality of feeling which constitute true dignity.

"Why should we be for ever undoing the work of life? Why should we wish to be just like every body else? I will be myself, and make the best of it. God grant that I may grow better!"

Mr. Stearns left the theological seminary, with his class, in the autumn of 1828. On the occasion of anniversary, he read a sketch of the character of Ulric Zuingli, which afterwards appeared in the *Spirit of the Pilgrims*, Vol. II, pages 305—308. He also delivered a parting address to the Porter Rhetorical Society, of which he was at that time the presiding officer. This address, as it exhibits his *ideal* of the style and demeanor which becomes the pulpit, and may be considered the outlines of that model according to which he prepared himself for his public ministrations, will be presented in the sequel.

## CHAPTER IV.

HIS PREACHING IN PHILADELPHIA—RELAXATION AND STUDIES AT BEDFORD—PREACHING IN VARIOUS PLACES—INTEREST IN HIS NATIVE TOWN—DEATH OF A SISTER.

ON leaving the seminary, being convinced that his health, again much reduced, would not allow of his settling in the ministry, for the present, he accepted an invitation to pass the winter in Philadelphia, and assist the Rev. Dr. Skinner, by preaching in his pulpit a part of the time. It was a source of much mortification and pain to him, that even this service was too great for his broken constitution to sustain. His labors were comparatively light, but he crippled under them. "For one month out of three," he says, "I was unable to do any thing." He made up his mind, from this experiment, that he must leave the ministry as a profession, or content himself "to live as a wanderer," for a long while to come. About this time, also, he lost a friend by death, "who was to him almost as a brother." Grief and disappointment seemed now to blight his prospects and bow his soul to the dust. Yet his confidence in God was unshaken. He writes, "God is sovereign. I have been made more and more to feel that his judgments *are unsearchable* and his ways are *past finding out*. *We* cannot understand them. *We* cannot tell, by any particular reasonings, what *will* be his particular providences; nor why they take place as they do; verily the Judge of all the earth will do right,—but not often give us the reasons of



his conduct. Let us bow to his authority, without *one murmur*, and only say, with a firm, reverential voice, Let him do, for he hath a right to do. Yes, there *is* a Providence that directs all things. I do not find, after much investigation and reflection, that it promises much, *specifically*, but it does promise, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.' And why is not this enough? We have no demands on God; but we know that he is a very kind Master,—an indulgent Father; he will do *whatever is best*, and he will always be with us. This *is* enough. Let us trust him cheerfully, come what will. For my part, I may say, that though a wanderer and a stranger in the earth, I never felt more contented in my life."

From this period, Mr. Stearns resided, most of the time, for several years, with his parents, at Bedford. In the mean while, he was not idle. Retired in a great measure from the world, by strict attention to diet and exercise, and by occasional travelling excursions, he was able to give up his mind with much constancy, to his favorite studies and musings. He projected a work, on the Moral Nature of Man, to be comprised in three octavo volumes. The subject of the first was Conscience,—of the second, The History of Man as a Religious Being,—and of the third, The Doctrines and Economy of Revelation. The outlines of the first, after long and patient investigation, were sketched. The subjects of the other two volumes, were to be, it is presumed, among the principal topics of study, in after life. During this time also, besides rendering his father, now infirm with age, important assistance in his parochial and ministerial duties, Mr. Stearns would often go abroad and supply in vacant parishes for several weeks and even, in one or two instances, months in

succession. Pressing invitations were given him, by several societies to settle among them as a minister, with affectionate assurances that he might graduate the amount of service by his ability to perform it. But the good-will of a people cannot always greatly diminish the labor which their condition demands. Besides, he had made up his mind, upon mature deliberation, that to take upon himself the responsibilities of a Christian pastor and attempt the incessant labors of the ministry, with his present health, would be presumptuous. He never allowed himself, therefore, to be considered a candidate for settlement. On several occasions, however, he was led, by the importunities of those who felt a peculiar interest in his preaching, to review the grounds of his determination to remain unsettled, and inquire what God would have him do. The result was, in every instance, that the time for incessant labor in the sacred office had not yet come. In some of these societies he was deeply interested, and used to speak of them as objects of affection and prayer, to the day of his death. From one of them he writes :

“ March 15th, 1830, I find things altogether different from what I had expected. There is a revival here, and labor enough for any two healthy and vigorous and experienced men. I have no time to write and no time to study,—I must walk and talk and preach, or lie down and try to sleep, all the time. I am glad, however, that the Lord has brought me here. I believe it is for good. It has opened a new chapter in the book of his providence. I have read a new lesson, and I hope with some profit. There are not many cases of deep, pungent conviction ; but there are a few which it would make your heart ache to witness,—such writhing agony,—such

struggling with a sinful, obdurate heart;—and there is a general seriousness,—a disposition to hear and think and converse and inquire. One man who has been an *opposer*, came to a neighbor last night, and said, that ‘he was completely cornered up,’—he knew he ought to be conformed to God; but he wanted to ask one question: *How can a man love God, when he knows that he hates God with all his heart?* Some of the recent converts appear exceedingly well, and are very interesting. There are some quite young, who both charm and astonish me. One lad said to me, at an inquiry meeting, last Saturday evening, ‘I feel best, sir, when I feel most humble, but I *can’t be humble enough*; I want to *lie low at Jesus’s feet*,’ and this, with an expression of countenance, which seemed to speak more than words. There are some little girls, younger than A—— C——, that talk like old experienced Christians. But perhaps the most interesting feature of all is, a *spirit of prayer*; there are more praying men here than I have ever seen in any place,—and I am told there is a still greater number of praying women. These men are among the most intelligent and respectable and influential in the place,—old men of stout frames and strong minds,—and young men of firm nerve and decided character. I never heard such prayers offered by laymen, perhaps I may say, by any men in my life;—such simplicity, such pertinence, such calm fervor, such faith. They seem to have no more doubt, than if they stood right before the throne of God, and saw him, with their bodily eyes; and are no more agitated, than if they had been accustomed to stand there from their youth up. There is no wildness, no

extravagance ; but they seem to *talk* with God face to face. I attended one prayer meeting, in which there was very little conversation or address, but six such men prayed in turn. It was, indeed, like a heaven below. Irreligious and cold-hearted men might *say* this was fanaticism ; but I would almost defy them to come into such a meeting and *believe* it."

Mr. Stearns's feelings were so deeply interested in this parish, the prospect of immediate usefulness was so great, that, although it could offer few if any worldly inducements, he was nearly persuaded to risk all consequences and labor among them, till he fell in the work, and rose, as a martyr, to heaven. But circumstances made it very evident to his friends, that this inclination could not wisely be indulged. They saw, or thought they saw, that in a few weeks, or months, at longest, "the bruised reed must be broken," under the immense labors of such a society. He could look for no assistance in the work ; he could expect no important relaxation from his toils. Besides, it was *his nature* to do a *little* and do it well. How presumptuous then it might have been, at that time, to take upon himself such burdens !

Amidst the disheartening influences of sickness, and oft repeated disappointments, Mr. Stearns preserved, for the most part, a cheerfulness of spirits. But he must have been more than man, if his heart did not sometimes *sink*.

The following letters reveal the undisguised sentiments of the sufferer in his hours of deepest depression, and while they illustrate character, they may be generally useful to the sons and daughters of affliction :

"DEAR AND RESPECTED FATHER,

"Your letter of the 16th inst. was received last Saturday morning. I read it with mingled and conflicting emotions. I smiled and I wept over it. I was pleased with the simplicity and boldness of your faith, and melted by the repeated expressions of your kindness and tenderness. I admired the magnanimity of the father, and lamented the weakness and uselessness of the son.

"You say, that you are 'willing to believe that he, whose government is the very perfection of wisdom and goodness, does not as yet see me sufficiently qualified for that usefulness, for which he has mercifully designed me. He is therefore trying me in the furnace, and when the wood, hay and stubble are burnt up, and the like, he will dispel the cloud,' &c. I don't know. I thought so once. And I thought I was really making progress, and becoming, slowly but constantly, more prepared for such a happy issue. If this *be* the design, it affords but very faint encouragement,—such long and such severe discipline, and with such miserable apparent effect.

"But you say, in regard to the divine purpose, 'Be this as it may, if God is glorified, is not the end of your being answered, and shall not all be well?' Most certainly,—yes—yes—yes—without the shadow of a doubt,—all shall be well, and all *is* well. God alone is, and has been, my *only* hope for this life, as well as the future; if this were gone, all would be gone.

"I have been invited to take a temporary situation in ——— College. But, in my opinion, nothing would be

gained by this arrangement, as to efficiency and real preparation for the exciting and exhausting efforts of the pulpit. The only way for me is to *persevere*, and *keep trying*, until I succeed, or am constrained to abandon the ministry, as a profession, altogether."

"VENERATED AND BELOVED FATHER,

"Your letter of the 5th inst. came to hand yesterday morning. I sincerely thank you for your kindness and tenderness, most fully adopt the sentiments you express, and cordially reciprocate your best wishes. All things are, indeed, possible with God, and from him alone is my expectation. If he sees best that the talents and knowledge which, you are pleased to say, he has given me, should be made conducive to my comfort, or the good of mankind, he certainly will overrule events to the accomplishment of his purpose. If he sees best, he can easily relieve me of every embarrassment, give me health and vigor, and place me in a situation to act my part, as a man and as a Christian, and to do something for the happiness of my friends and for the welfare of society. If he sees best, it needs but a word, and it is done. If he sees it not best, I certainly do not wish it. But, however willing we may be that a diseased limb should be taken off, and however strong may be our conviction that it is for the best, this will not prevent the pain of amputation. Afflictions, though ever so salutary, are not for the present joyous, but grievous. Mine would certainly be intolerable, without this consolation; and even with it, the suffering is exquisite. Constituted as I am, it is as impossible it should be otherwise, as that the tenderest plant in nature should flourish and bloom, without earth or

air or water. It would be comparatively easy to gird myself up to the severest torture, for a few hours, or even a few days. But when the evil is long foreseen or apprehended, in the dim distance of the future, and comes on with slow but sure and steady approaches, and continues month after month and year after year, and hope allures but to deceive, and expectation is cherished but to bring disappointment, and patience itself does but prolong the suffering, and the very effort to sustain it becomes almost equally painful, then it is that nature will, *sometimes*, sink, and existence become a burthen, and the sweetest consolations but prevent the bitterness of despondency and complaint. Yes, there are times, it must be confessed, when my day ceases to shine, even with the faint glimmerings of twilight, when darkness gathers and settles, and lingers long and thick and silent around me, and when my plaintive and solicitous inquiry, 'Watchman, what of the night?' is only met with the cheerless return,—'No morning cometh, but the night,'—and all around seems to echo, *night!*

"But I forbear, and charge myself to shut back the dark waters which come flooding upon me while I write. I forbear, lest I draw too black a picture, and give pain where I would give only pleasure."

How earnestly he longed to enter into the field of the Lord and labor with the reapers, and how deeply he felt for the spiritual interests of his fellow-men, and especially for the inhabitants of his native town, may be gathered, in a degree, from the following letter, which was written to his father a little more than a year after the two which have just been quoted, and bears date, June 18th, 1831.

“If I can but conquer this protean disease, and rise from its deadly oppression with strength to defy its power, I shall consider no effort and no sacrifice, short of the sacrifice of moral integrity, too great. I sometimes flatter myself that I have not been vainly encouraged to expect such success. But it must be a work of time and self-denial and perseverance and patience, perhaps more than I can command. If I were fully convinced that there was no probability of my gaining any more health than I have had, my present disposition would be to go immediately home, and settle down as soon as possible, and patiently spend the little strength that I have, in the service of my Master, and calmly yield my spirit to his care. But I think he calls me to another course; and while I pursue it in dependence on him, I must quietly and cheerfully wait for the result. I hope he is blessing you with growing strength and reviving spirits, and, more than this, that you will ere-long be allowed, in meekness and in joy, to gather in for his garner an abundant harvest from among your people, as the result of your long and painful toil. I have long hoped and prayed for it, and, I may almost say, long expected it. I confess I shall be a little disappointed if such an event does not occur; but God knows, and not we, whether that would really be wisest and best. With him let us leave it, in serenity and faith, and all shall be well. It is a privilege to sow and cultivate, even if we may not be permitted to reap. And, perhaps, it may enhance the joys of heaven, to look down from that quiet home of rest, and see another of kindred spirit reaping in those fields, that have been sown with so much care and watched with so much solicitude, now become white for the harvest, and richly waving every where with abundant



fruits. O it will send a new thrill of delight through the soul, as the recollection comes up,—There I ‘broke up the fallow ground,’ and there I sowed the seed, and watched and toiled and prayed, and there I see now the gathering sheaves. With what joy, as they are borne along, will such an one ‘shout the blessing home.’ This is truly a remarkable day for revivals of religion. There are several, very interesting, in this vicinity. In W——, it is said, there are four hundred inquirers. And who can tell how soon there may be four hundred inquirers at Bedford. It is calm, believing, *trusting*, heartfelt, habitual prayer, that does such wonders. It is the ‘incense of *united* prayer, rising stilly, steadily, constantly, majestically, from confiding hearts to the throne of God, that brings down such overflowing blessings.”

Mr. Stearns loved his native village with a strong natural and Christian affection. Warm in his attachments, and imaginative as well as discriminating in his feelings, there were charms in his reminiscences of Bedford, of subduing power. There he first drew the breath of life,—there were his earliest friendships and pleasures,—there were the play-grounds and play-mates of his childhood,—there were the old men whom he revered, and the young men who had been his companions at school,—there was the grave-yard which treasured the dust of many generations, and there was the church in whose bosom his infant piety had been cherished. He loved the town. He had roved alone, or in company, through all its woods and over all its fields; and to his mind there was poetry in its sober hills and humble streams,—its rugged pastures and tangled swamps,—its quiet homes and cultivated farms. He knew every spot by familiar observation, and felt a sort of filial interest in every well known rock and aged tree.

Besides this, he identified himself with the inhabitants of the place. He was sensitive to the honor of the town, watched its growth, and indulged a noble pride in its advancement. When any stigma was thrown upon its reputation, he felt it almost as a blot upon his own.

In all his wanderings, he never forgot that Bedford was *home*, "sweet, sweet home." He loved it more than the crowded cities, more than the tasteful towns, more than the mountains or valleys of a country, which, though perhaps far more magnificent, was less familiar to his eye. He loved it because it was home,—and if, in any respect, it seemed changed, he loved it still.

For the spiritual interests of the younger generation, he considered himself, in some degree, responsible. He labored for them and with them, on suitable occasions, with fraternal assiduity; and some of them will long remember how he strove to convince them that in the religion of Jesus there is unspeakable joy; that without it, with a load of unpardoned sins upon their souls, they *were* unhappy and must be miserable; that the doctrine of forgiveness for the penitent, by a crucified Redeemer, was a theme for the wonder of angels, and for the melting gratitude of all mankind. And some of those who listened to his exhortations, and joined with sympathy in his prayers, are now, we trust, swelling the chorus of the redeemed with him in heaven.

Mr. Stearns identified the cause of piety in Bedford with the prevalence of those views and with that Christian practice which had been inculcated upon the people from the first settlement of the town. It was, therefore, with mortification with grief, and with anxiety, that he witnessed the attempted

overthrow of the established faith. We would not here revive the scenes of that long and painful controversy between truth and error. It is sufficient to say, that Mr. Stearns was ever active, in cheering the desponding flock, and in sustaining its injured pastor, from the time that, untried and unimpeached, he was ejected from his pulpit, to make way for another denomination, till both pastor and people were sheltered in a new and commodious temple of their own.

The language which he uniformly used to the brethren of the church and to which they also magnanimously responded was this: "There must be no compromise with error. Under existing circumstances, ask no favors, and, if honor and piety will allow, receive none. Let nothing be done, to reproach the honor of Christ; there must be no tricking, no double-dealing; nothing that is crooked; nothing that looks suspicious. Avoid even the appearance of evil. Take joyfully the spoiling of your goods. Better suffer wrong than do wrong. If money is taken from you, unjustly, to support . . . preaching, you *suffer*, but are not *responsible*. At all events, do nothing to injure your Christian character and growth in grace;—*that character must not be sullied!*"

In the winter of 1833, Mr. Stearns was called to part with his eldest sister, by death. She was the companion of his infancy, the first play-mate of his childhood;—the object of warm and pure and uninterrupted love. She was married to a gentleman who is a merchant in the place, and had become the mother of a beautiful child.

She was always of a delicate constitution, but from this time, she languished, and in a few months went down to an early but not untimely grave.

Mr. Stearns was now preaching, for a few weeks, in the town of ———. When he hears of her increased illness, he writes :

“A——, it seems, continues to decline. Poor girl, she has been spared so much longer than we feared, that I had began to indulge fond hopes that her disease, though very obstinate, might yet be subdued. It is painful, indeed, to think of parting with her, and sad to think of a breach in our family circle. But, it seems, that God has begun to remove us, and it will not be long before we are all on the other side of the valley of death. Let us not fail to bow in calm submission, and pray that he will lift upon us the light of his countenance, and lift the light of his countenance upon her, and give her bright views of that world where our sainted friends, I trust, are waiting to receive her, and where, I hope, we shall be joined with her in the enjoyment of God. Give my love to her, and tell her not to forget that God is a *father*,—Christ is a *brother*,—the Holy Ghost is a *comforter*,—and *heaven the home of the believer*.”

A few days after the above he writes :

“BEDFORD, Jan. 14, 1833.

“DEAR BROTHER,

“I have just returned from a visit to our dear, sick sister. About noon she had an ill turn and was supposed to be dying. She, however, soon revived a little, and is still living and has her reason perfectly. I think, I never saw one in her situation, more calm and tranquil and peaceful. I went to her bedside and asked, if she felt more comfortable; she said, ‘No.’ ‘Are you peaceful within?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘Can you say, I know in whom I have trusted?’ ‘Yes’ ‘Do

you feel willing to leave your friends in God's care?' 'Yes.' I sat some time in the room, and when I came away I spoke to her again: 'Is all well, yet?' 'Yes, well!' 'Let not your heart be troubled, believe in God, believe in Christ. I must leave you now; we shall meet again when God pleases, —good bye.' 'Bye.' For some time, she has been evidently and constantly approaching, nearer and nearer the grave, nearer and nearer heaven. She hopes she shall not be *impatient*, but longs to be gone. A few days since, she attempted to sing, and sung in her way that verse of Watts;—'Alas, and did my Saviour bleed!' She requested that her grave-clothes might be made, and gave some directions about her funeral. When she revived after fainting, at noon, Mr. M—— said, 'Do you know me, A——?' 'Yes,' said she, very earnestly;—and glancing her eye around the room, 'I know you *all*. Why did n't you let me go? I should have gone *easy* then?' It is very probable, a messenger may reach you, before this letter, but I have written that you may have some idea of her situation."

It is hardly necessary to add, that this poor girl, who in all her sickness was a model of patience, and of modest and confiding piety, fell sweetly asleep in Jesus, within a few hours after the above was written, and went, as the pioneer of this brother who had done so much many years before to win her gentle spirit to the Saviour, to glory.

## CHAPTER V.

SETTLEMENT IN BOSTON—FAILURE OF HEALTH—DEATH OF HIS  
FATHER—EFFORTS TO RECOVER—DISMISSION.

MR. STEARNS became now more and more anxious to enter efficiently upon the duties of that office to which he had devoted his life. Since the spring of 1830, he had been gaining in health, and encouraging his heart with the prospect of usefulness. He had made several experiments of his strength, in preaching, without serious inconvenience. In some societies of no small responsibility, he had endured hardness as a good soldier. In the autumn and winter of 1832, he supplied for several weeks in succession, the Federal Street church in Newburyport, and in the winter and spring of 1833, the Park Street church in Boston; and though he declined an invitation, at that time presented, to supply for a little season the Old South church, on account of infirm health, he was yet encouraged to believe that the time was not distant, when he should be able to sustain all the duties of the ministerial and pastoral relation.

Much of the following season was spent in journeying and relaxation. Near the close of the year, Mr. Stearns found himself so much invigorated, that urged on by providential circumstances, he was led to consider anew the question of immediate settlement in the ministry. The years of professional life were rapidly passing away. He had acquired a fund of knowledge and experience, which he could not con-

scientifically withhold from the church. He had repeatedly tested his strength of late, with the most encouraging results. And, might it not be possible, that he had held back too long already ; and might not the pleasing, though laborious employments of the sacred office, united with the cheering consciousness that he was now engaged in the appropriate business of his life, contribute more than continued leisure, with its attending discouragements, to secure the stability of his health ? And would it not be less inglorious, and more acceptable to God, that he should expend what strength he had, and finish his course, in the effort *to do* ; than to linger on unemployed, and, without an attempt to accomplish his work on earth, fall a victim, perhaps, to anxiety and discouragement ? “ He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it.” Thus he reasoned, and after much deliberation, came to the determination, to preach as a candidate for settlement, in any place to which God, in his providence, should call him. He selected for himself a retired parish, not far distant from his native town, in which he had preached for a little season, at a former period, among a people of steady habits, who would demand moderate labors, and could offer the prospect of usefulness, as the only inducement to settle among them. He would willingly have become their pastor and servant in the Lord. But in the event, the circumstances which respected a settlement were *untoward*. “ Surely,” said he, “ man deviseth his way and the Lord directeth his paths.”

A short time after this, he preached a single Sabbath to the Old South church and society, in Boston, and for several Sabbaths following to the Tabernacle church in Salem. On

his return from the last-mentioned place, he was induced to spend two Sabbaths and the intervening week in Boston, in ministerial labors, among the people of the Old South church and society. These two churches, with their respective societies, having presented Mr. Stearns a unanimous invitation each, to settle among them in the gospel ministry, he was naturally led to believe that God was now demanding his constant services in the church, and would have him without delay gird himself to the work. "The whole business of life," he says, "must come up in solemn review, and I shall need the wisdom and the prayers of my friends." He was also much affected, and at times overpowered, with the mysterious dealings of God, who after keeping him in the school of discipline so long, had suddenly thrown open these two large fields of labor, distinctly saying, as he thought, "Thrust in the sickle and reap." As he looked back, he was melted; as he looked forward, he was filled with awe. The responsibilities of the pastoral and ministerial office, sufficient if they could be appreciated, to crush an angel, had been growing in importance upon his imagination for years. They now rose up before him like a mountain which the voice of providence seemed to command his feeble shoulders to sustain. "Sometimes," he says, "I am ready to sink, and feel as if I had well nigh finished my course. Sometimes, I stand amazed at the providence of God; and very commonly am overwhelmed and overborne with a sense of his goodness and forbearance! I am melted under it and depressed with it! . . . . And then again, I am startled, like one that looks from a giddy height down a precipice; or a dreadful awe comes over me, as over one who looks up the side of a huge mountain or overhanging



rock! . . . . . Much of this week has been spent in taking a review of my past life,—running my eye all along the way in which the Lord has led me. I wish to look at all that is past, as if I had now come to the end; to see its errors, its sins, and its honest purposes too; to see how God has overruled all, and to learn, as well as I can, from the past, what are the indications of his providence for the future.”

After much deliberation, consultation and prayer, he accepted the invitation from Boston, and was ordained April 16th, 1834.

It may be a subject of surprise to some, that one so feeble from his youth, should consent to take upon himself the responsibilities of so arduous a station. But the reasons, in part, must have been gathered from the foregoing narrative;—*providential circumstances led the way*. Besides, a clergyman in Boston, under favorable circumstances, has opportunity to secure relief from the pressure of ministerial services, whenever necessity requires. It is expected that his discourses will be well studied, and all his exercises of a high order. But it is not desired, that he will deliver *uniformly* two or even *three* sermons on the Sabbath, lecture in different parts of the town during the week, spend the larger portion of his time in pastoral visiting, and struggle along with pecuniary anxieties and embarrassments, which forbid the indulgence of journeying or other recreation for health. Nor is he often under even an imaginary necessity to toil on, month after month, and year after year, till his constitution, be it of oak or a garden flower, is broken down, and he goes to his early grave, unappreciated, and with scarcely the consolation, that the work of the Lord has prospered in his hands.

In cities, the demands for ministerial service are great, and the responsibilities are greater. But talent and Christian taste is more generally appreciated; the burden of cares and labors is better understood; sympathy imparts health, and relief, generously and delicately proposed, gives courage to endure. If necessity requires, the clergyman may revive his waning strength, by temporary absence, and not feel that "the cause" will be injured, or that even the poor of the flock will think themselves unrequited for the sacrifices they make.

In the present instance, the infirmities with which the subject of this notice had been long encompassed, were made known without disguise, and the fullest and kindest assurances of all needed aid were received in return. There were also peculiarities in this church and society which seemed to urge, with much decision, a favorable answer to the call. They had been long without a pastor, and been subject to many disheartening providences. They were now *united*; and many individuals pressed hard the invitation.

In view of circumstances, the immediate friends with whom Mr. Stearns consulted, and who knew that he was better fitted, by nature and by education, to pilot the ship, than to tug incessantly at the oar, coincided with him in opinion, that his prospects for health and usefulness would be greater in this than in almost any other pastoral connection in the land. Nor in all their disappointment, and painful watchings, and anxieties for the invalid in a foreign country, and grief for the ties of friendship, at last unexpectedly ruptured, have they been led to doubt, that this opinion was correct.

The day of ordination was a season of solemnity and

anxiety to Mr. Stearns. He was now to gird on the whole armor of God, to propose his life as a sacrifice to the church; to address his soul to its great conflict with the world. *Ordination* day! Sufficiently exciting to a young candidate, at best, many circumstances conspired, in the present instance, to make it overpowering. Dr. Skinner, with whom Mr. Stearns had labored, as with an elder brother, during the first months of his ministerial life, delivered the sermon:—"The joy of the Lord is your strength." The consecrating prayer rose warm from the heart of his predecessor in that holy place, Dr. Wisner. Parental love gave the *charge* of office to the "child of its hopes and fears;"—and it is not strange, that when the hand which, in its infancy, had clung to this elder brother for protection, was now presented to him in the name and with the fellowship of the churches, his whole frame should be shaken with emotion; or that the scenes of this day, preceded, as they were, by many weeks of labor and excitement, and attended, as they must have been, with rushing recollections and anticipations and anxieties, should have done much to prostrate the powers which were over-nerved to sustain them.

The following letter, written Monday after the Sabbath which succeeded ordination, will be read with interest by all who have ever preached as the pastor of a flock, and by all who feel a sympathy in the scenes just described:

"BOSTON, April 21, 1834.

"HONORED PARENTS,

"You may, perhaps, be looking for the earliest intelligence from the child of your hopes and fears, your joy and

disappointment, your faith and despondency, your prayers and lamentations. I have, therefore, taken a big book for a table, and sit down in my rocking-chair before the fire, to *scribble* a line.

“I cannot tell with what feelings I awoke, on the morning after you left me, in the consciousness that I was an ordained minister of the gospel, the authorized and responsible pastor of a numerous flock, appointed to care for their souls. Recollections of the past and anticipations of the future, came rushing over me in strange combinations, and waves of emotion rolled through my heart, like a sea after a storm. I rose and dressed myself, and sat down at my window to muse, in silent astonishment, on the scene that lay before me. It was all enchantment. Directly under my eye was a wide field of the dead, covered with the monuments of generations past. There lay some of my own kindred. There lay one who was the companion of my infancy and childhood, who has often borne me in her arms, and led me to school, and amused me in my sports. There lay some of my predecessors, in the care and service of the church,—Huntington and Eckley,—and I know not how many of those who were before them. The green grass was springing up among their tombs, and over their graves, in the freshness of the morning, and the dew lay upon it, and the rising sun glittered on the drops, and the tombs and thick grave-stones threw their long shadows over the dead, as if to veil them from excessive brightness. In the corner opposite, Park Street church, where I preached my first sermon in Boston, stood in its grandeur, and lifted its tall spire into the skies. Along the outer edge, a row of lofty elms spread out their venerable branches. Then the thronged

street displayed itself, and the noise of wheels and hoofs had begun, incessant for the day. And next the crowded dwellings of the city rose in massy piles. Among them, and directly opposite my window, was to be seen in modest retirement, and almost shouldered into obscurity by more recent and imposing structures, what was probably the mansion of some great one a century ago. The towers and steeples of ten or twelve churches or meeting-houses might be discerned at a glance, and among them the spire of my own, just rising over the top of the Tremont. Beyond them lay the harbor in full display of its beauty and glory, its islands and ships,—the *castle*, the very spot with which is associated the most fascinating portion of the history of one of my grandfathers, the house of industry and its companion, and near them the famous heights of Dorchester, now included within the limits of the city. Around to the right, in one continued line, rising above all the buildings, were distinctly seen the hills of Dorchester, Roxbury and Brookline. My eyes glanced over the distant and variegated scenery, and then returned, and rested on the pensive spot that lay immediately under my window. I gazed there, fixed in unremembered thought and was lost, till the summons came for breakfast. I then went down and attended the devotions of the family and sat with them a little while at the breakfast table, and hastened back and resumed my seat and meditations before the window, till torn away by the calls of one and another whose visits have been incessant ever since Saturday. However, I had a little leisure, and wrote about one third of a sermon which I had begun at home, and finished it. Yesterday, I preached for the first time as a consecrated pastor, and truly must say, I

never knew what it is to be a minister before. There are feelings which spring up in a pastor's heart, of which I had scarcely conceived. Candidate preaching, or supply preaching, is but as a schoolboy's lesson, in comparison with it. I had also a child to baptize, and have now some idea of what you feel, when you drop the emblematic water upon the head of a lamb of your flock, as it lies on its parent's arm, and lifting the same hand still wet with the emblem towards heaven, consecrate the young immortal to Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

"The weather in the morning was very forbidding ; it rained freely till almost meeting time ; but the house was *full*.

"I know nothing how the services were received, and am not particularly anxious about it. On account of the weather, as well as my own feeble health, it was a hard day to preach ; but it was an interesting day to me. I came home and threw myself upon my bed, with aching limbs, and full of strange thoughts and emotions. In the evening I had a real thorough-going sick headache, and have now scarcely recovered from it. But I have lived to become an ordained minister of Christ,—to be entrusted with the pastoral charge,—and to preach once, as one that watches for souls. What is now before me I know not. I can scarcely see a step's distance. I must try to walk by faith, for certainly I cannot by sight. I think if I were able to sustain the office and do any good, I should be pleased to live and labor and pray, and, if God so please, to die here, with and for my people. My people ! It seems to me that I say this, with some such feelings as a father or a mother says for the first time, My son. But perhaps I may very soon fail them, and be obliged to leave. Let us not expect too much."

How important the caution, "Let us not expect too much!" But who could realize, at that time, *how* little it was safe to expect!

Mr. Stearns preached to his people two Sabbaths and one sermon on the third Sabbath, and never preached afterwards. He was, doubtless, a sick man, sustained chiefly by excitement, at the time of his ordination. The stock of health, sedulously gathered for years, was greatly diminished by the labors and influences already noticed. In addition to these, the severe trials of his father at Bedford, in which he sympathized perhaps too deeply, clouded his spirits and consumed his strength. Then came the ordination,—the soul-inspiring but exhausting services of the *first* Sabbath,—the incessant visiting, and receiving of company which naturally follows, and new responsibilities and labors heretofore untried. It was evident to some that Mr. Stearns had gone, unwittingly, in the very outset of his work, far beyond his strength. After the third Sabbath, he became fully conscious of the fact. Still he struggled on. But it was in vain! He grew sick,—his mind became confused,—he felt that he was gone!

This was a dark and a bitter season. The star of hope which had cheered him on, for so many years and had led him up at last to the attainment of his wishes and prayers, *went out*. It went out, and all around was night! Conscious that he could do no more, he came directly over to the writer's house, at Cambridge; and never can fraternal sympathy forget his appearance at that time;—the pale features,—the tear which floated in his large eye,—the smile of resignation which played on his face,—the tones which quivered upon his lips,—the image of exhaustion, of strong but placid

emotion which he presented, as he threw himself upon the sofa, and said, "*I am done; I can do no more!*" You must help me down as well as you can."

In a few days, however, hope dawned again, and soon hope, that *hope* which, in his own language, "allures but to deceive," and is "cherished but to bring disappointment," resumed its ascendancy. He was encouraged to believe, that by a few days of repose or recreation, he might recover his elasticity and resume his duties. He *hoped*, but his health evidently was declining; he made an excursion to Nahant, enjoyed the air and the scenery, but grew worse. Finding that it was still "hope deferred," he chose to return to Bedford, and there endeavor, amidst the freedom of his native fields, to gather back his strength as rapidly as Providence would allow.

But weeks past on and months, and the invalid, though encouraging himself that he should soon be restored, was probably "nothing bettered, but rather grew worse."

This sickness was a trial of no ordinary character to all concerned. To Mr. Stearns himself, it was the running over of the cup of bitterness. It brought back the discouragements of many years with redoubled power. "O, no one can tell," said he, "the struggle I have had against nature or disease, and untoward circumstances, while many must have looked upon me as pusillanimous and idle, and destitute of the spirit of a man." It threw another cloud upon the future. "Yet," he continues, and this was the only earthly prop which sustained him, "I ever have thought, and I think still, that I shall rise again and be useful."

It was a peculiar trial to friends. They saw him borne



down by responsibilities which the Christian pastor though sick cannot throw off, and which *when* sick, however cheered by the patience and encouragements of his people, he cannot sustain. They saw that the principle of vitality burned low, and that the very attempt to remove the burdens which choked the flame might probably quench it for ever.

It was a peculiar trial to his people. That ancient vine so long neglected had just begun to weave around and sustain itself and put forth a fresh luxuriance upon the newly chosen prop, when that prop falls beneath the weight, and leaves the discouraged branches to be again trodden under foot or wind their unsupported way to heaven as they can. The mutual relations of pastor and people were encompassed with difficulties. Still it was not thought expedient that they should be suddenly sundered. He on his part was relieved and cheered, with the most delicate and generous assurances, from those of his flock who visited him at Bedford, and they on their part were encouraged to hope.

In the autumn Mr. Stearns revived, and having gained strength for journeying, there was ground of confidence that the season of the year, so invigorating to the debilitated, would restore him to comfortable health. This confidence might perhaps have been realized. But God in his inscrutable providence had prepared for him another blow.

Mr. Stearns's father, now advanced in years, had been gradually declining through the summer! He saw distinctly that his end was near. The second Sabbath in October, sacrament day, he took public leave at the Lord's table of the flock which he had fed, through storm and through shine, for almost forty years! From that day, knowing that his work was done,

and being weary of life, his "soul panting," as he said, "for the pure society of the blessed," he went steadily down to the grave! Mr. Stearns was at his side, heard his dying counsels, his bright anticipations, the holy breathings of a spirit longing to ascend; he saw the flesh waste, the frame bend, the eye sink; he watched the faltering pulse, listened for the last indication of life, closed the eye which had so long looked upon him with a father's love, and the cold lips which had given him the charge of ministerial fidelity but a few months before. He bent the knee with his sisters in prayer, and sustained on his feeble arm the bereaved widow to the grave. And though in all this affliction he was calm and well supported, when the scene was over, his spirits fell and his strength died away! For a long time he appeared to be going downward to the grave; life burnt in him like the flame of an exhausted lamp, flickering and low. But it went not out; towards spring it kindled anew, and as the season opened, there was encouragement that health might yet be regained.

That no pains might be spared to effect so desirable an object, and as the invalid was now able to ride a short distance every day, it was thought advisable that he should spend the summer in constant travelling, to the extent of his strength. A light and easy carriage was procured, in which he could be sheltered or exposed at pleasure, and the writer started with him from Bedford, June 6, 1835, on a pilgrimage for health. He was at that time so feeble that he could walk but with difficulty from the house to the carriage. He travelled the first day but little more than five miles, the second about ten, and the third not over twelve. At each day's stopping-place, he was so much exhausted as not only to keep his bed most of

the time, but to require assiduous and laborious attentions. He was three weeks in going from Bedford, by way of Norwich, New London and New Haven, to New York ; and for the first week, it seemed as if the effort could not be sustained by him, and the project of travelling must be abandoned. Soon however he began to gain strength, and improved so rapidly that, arriving at New York, he was able to walk daily perhaps a quarter of a mile ! Having consulted with a distinguished physician in that city, he was encouraged to go forward. The journey was resumed with trembling. He passed up, through the north-western parts of New Jersey and Pennsylvania, to Ithaca in the State of New York ; thence, between the lakes Cayuga and Seneca, to Buffalo. After spending a little season at the falls of Niagara, he returned, through Rochester and Utica, to Troy ; thence northward to Burlington, and thence, through Vermont, back to his native place, having been absent from home about three months.

The arrangements of this journey were such that he could ride or rest, turn aside from his route and visit the curiosities of the country, or go forward, as he pleased. This exercise, with the healthful excitement of novel and ever-changing scenery, was so beneficial to Mr. Stearns that he came home decidedly convalescent and comparatively well. The perils and anxieties, the curiosities, the beauties and sublimities of that eventful journey, cannot here be described. The most remarkable characteristic of it, as it respects Mr. Stearns, was his sensitiveness to circumstance and scenery. One of nature's own offspring, he sympathized with her in all her works. His heart sang with the birds, opened and shut with the flowers, was awed and silenced among the mountains, was made mourn-

ful by forests of funereal hemlock, was filled with heavenly visions at the sight of a glorious sunset, and was irritated and depressed by the strait hills of a houseless turnpike. He observed every thing, studied every thing, and spared no pains to understand every thing, as if his object had been to become familiar with nature rather than to repair a broken constitution. He was particularly impressed and even agitated by the extraordinary sublimities which he sometimes witnessed. On one occasion, he was nearly overpowered by them. The ride from Clarkestown to Carbondale in Pennsylvania, over the Moosic mountain, is supremely grand. He passed the first ridge and in the descent had a broad side view of the second. It was glorious beyond description. It lay along against the firmament in beautiful and awful repose. The dark verdure of hemlock forests which covered its sides was still darkened by thick clouds which hung over it, and the movement of the sun which occasionally broke through, gave the whole an appearance to an excited imagination, as if the spirit of God passing silently by and overshadowing the mountain threw here and there a smile upon the inexpressible grandeur of his works below. Mr. Stearns sat still and gazed in silent amazement. As he advanced, all was new and wild and solemn. There was indeed every appearance of enterprise,—rail-ways, cars of coal, steam-engines laboriously puffing forth their volumes of smoke, and men busy at their various occupations,—but withal there was a mysterious stillness, as if all things animate and inanimate stood in awe. As we approached the ridge, Mr. Stearns became greatly excited by the view, and in a voice agitated with emotion would only say, after long intervals of silence, and in suppressed tones, and with an expression

of countenance which cannot be described,—Oh!—see!—I am overawed!

After this journey was completed, he attempted a tour of about three weeks' continuance, round the state of Maine, alone, in the little carriage which had borne him safely over the mountains of Vermont and Pennsylvania. From this excursion he returned with increased energy and *hope*; he spoke confidently of resuming his duties among his people in a few weeks more! In this expectation he had been encouraged and led on "from strength to strength," through the summer. Towards the close of autumn he visited New York again, for the purpose of consulting his physician and ascertaining how soon it would be safe for him to go back to his labors in Boston. He had already been with his people one or two Sabbaths, and had administered to them the sacrament of the Supper, and taken some part in the other public exercises. *Hope* now shone full upon his path. He was however advised to delay a few weeks,—and a few weeks more! At length, the first Sabbath in January was appointed, as the day on which he might go up to the house of the Lord and feed his flock like a shepherd again. But as the season drew on, after further investigation, it was discovered that his health was by no means matured, and that to preach at present would be a rash experiment, and might be attended with fatal consequences. He must live on hope certainly till spring, possibly till another winter, and indeed no one knew how long. On receiving this information, Mr. Stearns's heart sank in despondency. He had, however, acquired vigor of body and mind to act with decision, and to sustain in some measure his disappointment. He returned to Boston, and after suitable consultation asked a dismission.

One desire with regard to his people was still strong in his breast. It was to thank them for their patience, console them for their disappointment, persuade them anew to press forward to heaven, and take his leave of them, in a *farewell discourse*. But his constitution was really so infirm, his sensitive spirit had suffered so much, in view of the contemplated separation, that he was now unequal to the task. He began to write, but crippled under the effort. The last sermon which he had preached to his people, was from the words of Jesus, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." For this he had chosen the remaining clause of the same verse, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." He had written nearly one half of his discourse, when returning disease forbade him to proceed. The unfinished manuscript survives. It is a broken shaft; and stands in this volume, as a monument to his memory.

The effort which he made to perform this duty, and the feelings with which he contemplated his failure, are also on record:

"BEDFORD, March 3, 1836.

"DEAR BROTHER,

"It gives me pain to tell you, what it will give you equal, perhaps greater pain, to hear, my health fails me again, and I am utterly unable to be in Boston to preach a farewell discourse to my people next Sabbath. Soon after I returned from Boston, and as soon as I was a little rested and the excitement had begun to subside, I found that my health had suffered violence, and my strength was reduced. I still, however, kept up hope and resolution. There were three days of the next week, on each of which I made an effort, and with

some success, in preparing a discourse,—writing one day and sleeping with exhaustion the next. With this process, however, I felt satisfied, hard as it was. But at the close of the last day, last Friday, I found myself agitated and overcome,—weakened and shattered, like a ship after a storm. I went early to bed, soon had a sick headache, and was not sensible of a moment's sleep all night. The next day, I could only sit and doze and groan in my chair, and from that time I have not been able to add a sentence to my sermon. Indeed, I have been unable to do any thing, except to read a little in my Bible,—just enough to keep the soul steady and steadfast. Yesterday morning, I felt a *little* better, and thinking that possibly it were not yet too late, I 'girded up' to a desperate effort; but it was all in vain! A haze came over my mind,—the symptoms of disease came up,—and I floundered and sunk! Last night, I scarcely slept an hour all night, and to-day I am in constant disquietude. This is another sad disappointment,—a severe stroke from the chastening rod of my heavenly Father,—it prolongs and darkens the mystery of his providence. But it is *right*,—it is good,—I make no complaint."

Mr. Stearns spent the winter after his *dismissal*, at Bedford. The excitement which preceded and the exhaustion which followed that event, to one constituted and circumstanced as he was, were great. He had been for many years looking forward to the ministry as the principal object for which his life was desirable; he had trained himself, diligently, for its noble employments; he had at last entered upon the active duties of the pastoral office. The accepted station was as well adapted to the peculiarities of his mind and constitution,

as any he could ever hope to fill ; the probabilities that he could sustain it and glorify God in it were encouraging ; and it now seemed to him that the ends of his existence were about to be accomplished. When he made up his mind to ask a dismissal from his people, he knew that, to all human appearance, the prospect of usefulness in his chosen occupation was at an end. He had reason to fear, that henceforth he must be a burden rather than a blessing to society, and linger on, perhaps in a state of bodily and mental languishment, to which death itself would be preferable. The effects of this new affliction, however, were less injurious than might have been expected. After a few weeks, strength returned, the process of recovery went slowly on, and strange as it may now seem, Mr. Stearns was soon sustained, as he characteristically had been from youth, with the *sentiment*, that he should yet rise above disease, and “ be useful for a little season in the world.”



## CHAPTER VI.

JOURNEY TO WASHINGTON—VOYAGE TO EUROPE—FOREIGN  
TRAVELS.

In the spring, Mr. Stearns visited Washington, and made an excursion from thence to Mount Vernon.

“All the exterior of the government,” he writes, “is imposing. It is calculated to inspire an American’s heart with patriotic pride; to raise it with hope. But all within, all besides, disappoints, disgusts, sickens you with distrust and horrifies you with dread, and makes you turn away with loathing and heart-sinking. We made a pleasant excursion to Mount Vernon, and felt that the lowly, narrow, decaying receptacle of the *dead* could inspire us with more awe, reverence and satisfaction, than all the magnificence and parade of the living.”

On his return, he began to deliberate seriously upon a subject which he had often contemplated before, the propriety, in his case, of a voyage to Europe. To this undertaking he had been repeatedly advised, by many friends, and some physicians; and at this time providential circumstances seemed to point that way.

His own feelings are thus sketched on a loose leaf found among his papers since his death:

## PROS. AND CONS. VOYAGE TO EUROPE.

“1. Have five or six months’ time on my hands; how shall I best use it?”

"2. My prime object now is and must be to regain my health. By what means am I most likely to do it?

"3. Have an intellectual, moral, religious and ministerial reputation to sustain. How shall I best promote real worth of character, and secure public confidence and the confidence of my friends?

"4. Have long had a strong desire to visit Europe sometime, though I have not expected or desired to do it at present. When can I do it best? Have now no business, no family, no parish.

"5. How shall I best dissipate my present morbid feelings, and produce a healthful state of sensibilities?

"6. My *active* energies are weakened and depressed. How shall I best revive them, and bring myself into a fit state for the *active* duties of life?

"7. Have been very long and for many years of a peculiar and diseased state of body and mind,—have tried almost every remedy on a small scale. Ought I not now, if possible, to make some entirely new, bolder and more decisive experiment?

"These suggestions and inquiries thus far, rather bear in favor of going. So I think do the providences of God, and the involuntary tendencies of my own mind.

"But, 1. I shall not have so much time, and be able to travel so extensively, as I had hoped for, whenever I should visit Europe.

"2. I have not the established character which I would like to carry with me, nor those habits of efficient exertion, nor that acquaintance with men and places and things.

"3. I am not certain that this would be the best course for

mental and moral discipline, and best fit me for habitual, active labor and usefulness."

After much deliberation and prayer, the path of duty became, as he thought, plain. Accordingly, having committed the voyage to him who rules the winds and waves, and "can make us more or less comfortable at his pleasure," he set sail from New York, in company with Professor Stowe of Cincinnati, on board the packet ship Montreal, for London, June 8th, 1836.

With this devoted Christian scholar, with whom he had been a class-mate at the seminary, in Andover, he travelled through the season.

Mr. Stearns took pencil notes, each day, of all that was most interesting to his mind in England, Scotland and Germany.

In the autumn, after parting company with Mr. Stowe, who returned to America, he pursued the same practice of sketching daily, *with the pen*, and, his health increasing, wrote out many scenes of interest. Had he lived to revisit his native country, he would probably have prepared, from these abundant materials (sufficient in their present state for two moderate sized duodecimos), one or more volumes of travels. This may be a suitable place to mention, that, in a farewell letter written to his friends in America, a short time before his death, Mr. Stearns requested that his note books should never in any form be given to the press. The reason is obvious. "They are so crude,—so undesigned,—sketched, not written, generally in great weariness and pain, and merely to assist his memory." A few extracts, however, which seem to have been written with considerable fulness, and which help

to illustrate character, and show the intense interest which he took in the objects, scenes and associations of the Old World will be given. There are, also, many letters which were sent to America by him, during these travels, from which our limits will allow us but sparingly to draw :

POOLX, Dorsetshire, July 1, 1836.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"You may perhaps conceive, but I cannot describe to you, the peculiar sensations, the tumultuous, successive, wave-like emotions, with which I sit down to address you from the shores of Old England; knowing that more than three thousand miles of wild ocean are between us, and not knowing, scarcely believing, that this sheet will ever be wafted across the deep waters and be borne to your doors.

"Through the kind providence of our heavenly Father, we floated safely over the waves, and were landed at our destined port on Wednesday afternoon,—twenty days from New York. The voyage was, on the whole, prosperous, and rather quick, though the weather was uncommonly tempestuous for the season. After leaving the Gulf Stream, the region of squalls, where the ship was every day drenched by a squall of rain, and sometimes kept wet for the whole day, and when we were just past the Grand Bank, we encountered a pretty severe gale. It commenced with a squall of rain, on Saturday afternoon,—ten days out. The clouds, collecting and thickening with almost every shade of darkness, and involving themselves into each other, rolled fiercely over the sky, giving the whole heavens a most wild and threatening aspect, while the waters below, as if agitated by some deep passion or fell

purpose, swelled broad and full from their depths, and dashed up on their surface their short, quick, splashing waves in unwonted confusion. At the same time, the wind, growing stronger and stronger, rushed boldly on, driving our strained and creaking vessel along its foaming path, with an almost fearful rapidity. All the elements seemed as if summoning their energies, and preparing with collected might, for some untold and awful contest. As the night came on, the ocean grew more wild and fiery. Every cresting wave seemed a flash of light; while the mass of water around assumed a deeper and still deeper blackness. It was a thunder-cloud condensed into thick waters beneath our feet. The sparkling of the ocean, along the sides and foaming track of the ship, was unusually brilliant, and gave the appearance of the galaxy or milky-way on either side of us, as you have seen it in the heavens, on some very bright night in winter; as if the stars and constellations of stars had left their place in the skies (which were now darkened), and were rolling in all their splendor in the waters below. Along this splendid path our gallant ship glided before the wave, which rose with ever-increasing majesty, and seemed rushing to overwhelm us. On deck the scene was scarcely less appalling. Nothing was heard amidst the noise of the storm, save the straining of planks and spars, the snapping of sails and slipping of cordage, the sailors' laboring cry and the deep, sepulchral tones of the captain's voice issuing his peremptory commands, in sounds which seemed unearthly. And no human forms were seen but those of the sailors themselves, who, in their peculiar dress, flitting from side to side of the ship across a dim light, or silently and in long trains ascending the ropes, or hanging

upon the yards, gave you, in spite of yourself, the impression of spectres rather than of men. Nearly all the sails were taken in, and all made fast and snug, and soon we rolled as safely, though not as comfortably on, as if all were mild and gentle as the zephyrs. We had nothing to fear, and though most of our company were awed, but few were alarmed. Still the tossing and rolling and plunging of the ship made it almost impossible for any one to rest in his berth. About midnight I lay down, and kept my couch till morning. The wind increased during the night. When I rose, the clouds had disappeared, the sky was clear, and the sun bright; but the wind still continued, and the ocean presented a scene as new and strange as it was grand. It was Sabbath morning; and it seemed as if the Lord of the Sabbath was before us, in his majesty, bidding us behold his power and adore. After dinner, I climbed upon the storm-house, and binding my hair with my handkerchief, and fastening myself with a firm hold upon the rigging, stood there, for an hour, to gaze in silent and solemn meditation on the scene around me. It was the hour of public worship in the land which I had left, and you may well suppose that I sent many a thought and many an eager look over the mountain wave, to the villages and cities where my friends were gathering together, on a calm summer's morning, to worship him who is the God of the sea as well as of the dry land. I watched the waves as they rose and swelled, and stood up like mountains, intercepting every distant view, and rolling on as if to overwhelm us, and then sinking harmlessly away again, giving place to others as imposing, as powerful, as appalling as themselves. I had seen nothing like it; and you can form the best idea of it, by

supposing the mountains of our own beloved land, and over which we have travelled, day after day, in peril, had become liquid, and, moving from their foundations, were rolling about with ever-changing forms, in wild disorder. And here our little bark rose and fell and struggled on, like a weary bird with half folded wing, borne down and almost overwhelmed by the unrelenting fury of the tempest. It struggled on, more faithful to its trust, than ungrateful man to his God. It struggled on, outlabored and outlived the gale, and all was safe within. The weather still continued rough, and in a few days more we had nearly a repetition of the same scene. Each was sublime,—was grand,—was awfully magnificent. This tempestuous weather, which is quite uncommon at this season of the year, made our passage both wearisome and sickening; and yet it will always be remembered with the most pleasing recollections. Of the inhabitants of the deep, we saw nothing very wonderful,—a few porpoises and grampuses, a shark, two or three whales, a flying fish, a few sea gulls, and a multitude of mother Cary's chickens.

"I wish I could now give you an account of the first appearance of land, of English landscape, as it first rose to my eye,—beautiful and lovely, beyond all the charms in which my fancy had ever arrayed it. But I must refrain, and only say, we landed at Portsmouth, and the next day took a packet and came directly to this place."

LONDON, July 12, 1836.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"I rose early, to enjoy the hallowed hour of devotion. It was my first Sabbath in a foreign land, and a delightful

morning it was. The sky was clear, and the air was fresh and balmy. I walked beyond the closely built houses of the town, now closed in silence on their slumbering inhabitants, to spend those halcyon moments among cottages and gardens and fields and hedges, all bright with the morning sun and fresh with the dew of heaven, to be regaled with views as beautiful as they were new, with the fragrance of flowers I had never before seen, and the music of birds whose notes had never before struck my ear and thrilled my heart. When I had reached the top of a broad, swelling, verdant hill, about one and a half miles from the town, I took my position upon the top of a hedge bank. The town and the harbor were before me, and all around were the neat, white-washed, straw-thatched cottages and blooming gardens and velvet-like fields, enclosed with green and flowering hedges, and shaded with deep-verdant trees, and enlivened with gay birds, who alone of all animated beings seemed, with inanimate nature, to have caught the spirit of the morning, and to be sympathizing and vying with each other in the worship of their Maker. I had not stood there long before I enjoyed the principal object of my search. It was the morning lark, rising and singing towards heaven,—just as Jeremy Taylor has so beautifully described it to our imaginations. I could not have had a better exhibition of it. It satisfied and more than satisfied my previous and most pleasing conceptions of it. I saw one rise, and watched its ascent and listened to its song till it was entirely above and beyond my sight. I could only hear its note, more soft, more sweet as it was nearer the home of the blest and the object of its praise, the throne of its God. I could think of nothing but of some returning angel, or of some sainted spirit released from



its service below and springing from the earth, gaily ascending higher and higher, singing more and more joyously, and resting not from its song or its flight till it folds its wing and rests its foot by the throne of him who made it. I could still hear its note, and still I gazed after it, and presently discerned its form, and saw it descend; but its descent was if possible more beautiful than its ascent. It returned to earth with such a graceful and easy motion, it seemed as if conscious that it could at any time rise again. I did not intend to give you any description of this hour and of this scene, and you can have no idea of it now. It was altogether the happiest hour I have enjoyed since I left my native land. I returned to my lodgings satisfied,—filled,—and feeling as if I had had a glimpse, and caught a note, of heaven.

“It was pleasant when the time of public worship came, to meet once more with Christian worshippers in a Christian sanctuary, though the house was strange and the assembly unknown, and these Christian worshippers were born of the flesh and born of the Spirit, in a land which till now I had never seen.”

“LONDON, July 16, 1836.

“MY DEAR SISTER,

“There are so many things which it seems almost necessary for one to see and hear, that with the fatigues and cares of journeying, I am kept in almost constant excitement and weariness. Perhaps I ought and I hope I shall be able to moderate my desires and control myself a little more as I become more accustomed to these exciting scenes. It is very important for any one, and especially for an invalid among

strangers and in a foreign land, to have some agreeable and confidential friend for a companion. In this respect I find myself much favored. And yet it cannot be expected that our desires and tastes and business will always incline us in the same direction. The power of early associations is very great, and I was so desirous of visiting scenes which have long interested my imagination and heart, and of making an excursion upon the Isle of Wight before leaving the south part of England, that my friend and I parted company for a few days, he taking a coach at Salisbury for London, by the shortest route, and I, in an hour afterwards, taking another coach for Southampton. It was the first time that I had found myself entirely alone, among strangers in a strange land ; but the day was fine, and being well accommodated with a good box-seat, and making interest with the coachman, I secured his attentions, and was well entertained by his pointing out to me every object worthy of observation on the route. . . We passed several noblemen's seats and had some fine views of the surrounding country. On arriving at Southampton, as soon as I could secure my luggage and get some refreshment, I took a steamboat for Cowes, on the Isle of Wight. We had a delightful sail down the river and bay and across the channel, and at Cowes I took a stagecoach for Newport. My first object here, after securing lodgings for the night, was to engage a conveyance and make arrangements for my intended excursion the next day. Having succeeded in this, just at night I took a walk of a mile over a hill, which commands a very extensive and most delightful prospect, to Carisbrook castle, where king Charles the first was confined, the ruins of which are now in excellent preservation. It is a very romantic spot, and associated with

a good many interesting historical recollections. The next morning I rose early, and with a little pony and gig, and a boy for a guide, I set off at six o'clock for the interior and eastern part of the island.

"The island is every where cultivated in the highest degree, and this part especially is covered with neat cottages and gardens, with rich farm-houses, and wheat-fields all enclosed with beautiful green hedges, and, rising into broad swelling hills and then sweeping away into rich verdant valleys, it looks more like a paradise than an earthly abode of trial and sorrow and toil. We rode on or through this beautiful garden, regaled with fragrance and music and loveliness, six miles, till we came to the village of Arreton. Just by the old church, I told the boy to stop and stand by the pony, while I walked up to the church-yard. Instantly some half dozen little white-haired boys and girls rushed out of the neighboring cottages, and ran to open the church-yard gate, vieing with each other in their attentions to the stranger, hoping, I suppose, to secure his notice in return, and to receive a penny. A very little boy, apparently more intelligent than the rest, was foremost, and instantly throwing his arms around a plain monumental slab, 'Here lies the Dairyman's Daughter, sir,' he exclaimed,— 'and here's her sister,' exclaimed half a dozen voices at once,— 'and there's her brother, and here's her father and mother, and that's her grandmother's grave.' I felt that I was on hallowed ground, 'just by the verge of heaven,' and would have been glad to have been alone, to indulge my feelings in silence and without interruption.

"It was early morning,—the dew still lay upon the grass, and its drops were sparkling in the sun. We stood upon the

north side of the venerable old church, which threw its shade just far enough to embrace in its shadow the few graves around us, and to cast a soft, transparent veil over the resting-place of the sainted 'Daughter,' and her happy family. To secure silence and disguise my feelings, I took my pencil and began to copy the inscription: 'To the memory of Elizabeth Waldron, "the Dairyman's Daughter," who died May 30, 1801, aged 31 years. She being dead yet speaketh,' &c. &c. &c.,—a long inscription which I did not copy. By the side of her's is a smaller monument: 'Sacred to the memory of Hannah, daughter of Elizabeth and William Waldron, who departed this life Jan. 14, 1800, in the 27th year of her age.' There were no monuments, but simple mounds of earth, to indicate where the rest of the family repose. Though it was a quiet and retired place, the spot on which we stood was much footworn, and evinced that though the humble daughter of a poor dairyman has slumbered here, in silence, for more than thirty years, her grave is not unknown, forgotten or unnoticed. 'And do strangers often visit this spot?' asked I. 'Oh, yes, sir, a great many.' 'And why, do you think, they come *here* to see *this grave*? It is because Elizabeth was so good and died so happy,—is it not?'—So taking this for my text, I preached to my little audience a short sermon, and then dropping a penny or two into the hand of him who 'did outrun' the others, and 'was first at the sepulchre,' I bid them good bye and turned away. 'But where,' I called, recollecting myself, 'where did the Dairyman's Daughter live?' 'Out there, sir, on hill-common,—that is the way.' So seating myself again in the gig, I bade my guide take the direction of hill-common. We rode down a narrow valley

and over a small stream, and then up a long, swelling, gently-ascending hill, which became more and more like a broad plain. Along its sides and on its top were several neat cottages, and all the way beautiful hedges and fields. I could not but recollect, that by this very path a funeral procession had once and again wound, slowly and sadly and quietly and with heavenly hopes, to the old church and church-yard which I had just left. I looked back and saw both the church and church-yard, and the little surrounding village,—all still visible among the venerable old trees, which partly overshadowed and obscured them. I looked around me,—and looked onward, and seemed to see that same procession moving down the road, and I caught at once their thoughts and feelings,—and all the vision of that scene was, for the moment, a distinct reality. About a mile and a half from the church I saw a pretty white-washed cottage, surrounded by well-kept fields, and a small garden and shaded with trees. I could not but recognise it, as the very place where the dairyman and his daughter once lived. As I alighted from my gig, and stepped over the stile, and moved towards this attractive dwelling, a blooming young girl of perhaps seventeen or eighteen years, and of simple rustic manners, came out to open the wicket gate. ‘Was this the residence of the Dairyman’s Daughter?’ I inquired. ‘Yes, sir; my grandmother lives here now, the widow of Elizabeth’s brother,—walk in, sir, and I will call her.’ Directly as I entered the cottage, a sorrowful-looking, broken-spirited, care-worn old woman made her appearance, courtesying very humbly, and seeming ready to answer any inquiries which I might be pleased to make. ‘Good morning, ma’am,’ I said,—‘I have called to see the place where the Dairyman’s

Daughter lived,—this is the place, is it ma'am?' 'Yes, sir, this is the place; she lived here with her father and mother. My husband was her brother,—poor, dear man; he suffered every thing almost before he died. But he is gone, sir, and they have all gone, and we must go soon,'—and she sighed bitterly. A few kind, calm words, however, seemed to compose her and give her assurance; and then she related to me all the particulars of the family which she supposed might be interesting to a stranger. There is one brother, Robert, still living, who resides at Newport, and who is not, I suppose, in a very prosperous condition. The widow of William, who now occupies the cottage, has a daughter and grand-daughter living with her, and I think, her daughter's husband. They still depend on *the dairy*, for a subsistence, and have two cows and five acres of land. I cannot tell you why it was, but I stood and looked over the hedge and gazed on those *cows* with indescribable interest. The daughter and grand-daughter were engaged that morning in managing their little dairy, and were making butter. If I had leisure, I could give you, from memory, an exact drawing of the cottage and yards and gardens around it,—but I must defer this till, if it pleases God, I am permitted to see you, and sit and talk with you again by the family fire-side, and under the paternal roof. Every thing about the cottage was neat as a dairy-room. On my right, as I sat opposite the open door, was the fire-place, filled with fresh boughs and evergreens,—over it was suspended an engraved portrait of Rev. Legh Richmond,—‘the dear, good man, if ever there was one,’ as the old lady called him. On a small table behind me, with two or three other books, lay a Bible. As I turned around and caught a glimpse of it, I said

instantly, and I know not why, 'Is that Elizabeth's Bible?' 'Yes, sir, that is her Bible, and there,' opening and bringing it to me to look at, 'there is her name written by her own hand, the only specimen of her hand-writing which we have.' 'And does this staircase,' said I, pointing to a door and flight of stairs on my left, in a corner of the room, 'lead to her chamber,—and may I walk up?' 'Yes, sir,—O yes, sir,—but you will find it in much disorder. We have had a mason at work there, but you may look up.' I ascended the stairs and looked around. I could not tell what the mason had done, or was doing, but it was just the chamber which is described in the Tract, and looked as if its long since departed occupant had left it but yesterday. The walls were white-washed, and the floor was washed white. There was the window, the only window in the chamber,—and through which the setting sun had looked in upon the dying child of heaven,—and there was her bed where she lay, and from which her spirit took its upward flight,—all just as you would imagine it. Before the cottage are two or three small elms, which the Tract I think, has called a vine; but they answer very well to the description, and every thing is in exact accordance with the picture.

"Before I left the cottage, the good woman brought me an album, in which visitors '*if they please*,' inscribe their names. I ran it over, and among other familiar names, I observed with a thrill of delight, 'Samuel Green, Boston, U. S.,' and 'H. Humphrey, Amherst, Mass., United States.' It made me feel as if I were at home, and yet on doubly hallowed ground, and I could not refuse to add my own humble name.

"As I was coming away, I could not but throw some pittance

into the withered hand, and plucking a rose-bud from the garden hedge, and a white daisy from the ground, I bade farewell to the widowed occupant of the Dairyman's cottage, and rode on, with many 'a lingering look behind,' and a bosom swelling with emotion, to a spot scarcely second in interest to this; to the place where lived and preached and prayed and toiled, with delight in his Master's service, that holy and beloved one, by whom the Dairyman's Daughter, 'though dead, yet speaketh.' About six miles further, and we came to Brading. It is a small, compact town, closely built, and chiefly on one street, which winds through a narrow, but fertile valley, and is terminated by a small, pleasant harbor. Here I procured some refreshment for my pony and guide, and a breakfast for myself, and then walked out to see the church, church-yard and parsonage house, where was, for several years, the scene of labor, and the residence of Legh Richmond, who had a mind and a heart to give a charm to every place, and whose name now gives a charm to every thing with which it is associated. The church is a huge, old pile, of different styles of Gothic architecture, and built at different periods. The original is said to have been the oldest church on the island. It has a large square tower, and a clumsy quadrangular spire. It is built of stone, as all the old English churches are. It stands upon a pleasant eminence above the road, at the extremity of the town, and is surrounded by a large church-yard thickly set with monuments of the dead. Among them, and just at the corner of the church, is the unpretending monument of 'Little Jane, the Young Cottager,' and near it, in front of the parsonage, are the monuments from which little Jane learned her first lessons in Christian piety. Around her grave,



as around the Dairyman's Daughter's, the ground is all footworn, and the grass is down-trodden, seared and dead, beneath the steps of the frequent visiter. Immediately behind, and approached by a path leading directly through the church-yard, is the parsonage house. It is a brick building, of two stories high, and two rooms in front, resembling a New England house, much more than any other which I have seen. On the right of the house is a beautiful and flourishing garden,—directly in front is a yard or court, ornamented with a rich variety of flowers, and on the left is an enclosure or avenue, like that on the east side of the old parsonage in Andover. All around, it is deeply shaded with venerable and verdant trees,—and before all, as I have said, are the church-yard and church. It commands a fine view of the town and valley and neighboring hills, and the harbor. Indeed it is one of the most simple, yet picturesque and interesting spots which I have seen, in a country every where famed for its natural scenery. But if we would except the parsonage, there is nothing in the town which would strike me as peculiarly interesting. I could not help reflecting how the lovely mind of Legh Richmond, viewing it from a lovely spot, could throw a fascination and a loveliness over a scene not otherwise particularly attractive. Another mind might have resided here much longer, and few would have known, and still fewer would have admired the humble town and the valley of Brading. From a room in the parsonage, a piano was sending forth soft notes of sweet and subduing music, which might almost have been mistaken for the breathings of Richmond's spirit; and, enchanted by the sound, the scene, the place, I lingered here, in unremembered musings, till I was in danger

of spending the time allotted to my visit on the island, and of losing the proper opportunity of return. Turning from this enchanting place, and calling for my pony again, I drove hastily on to Benbridge, the extreme point of the island in this direction, and connected with Brading as a part of the same curate's care. Passing out of Brading, I observed at a little distance from the road a small cottage, which I had no difficulty in recognising from description, as the earthly home of 'Little Jane.' Of my ride and of the place I will attempt no description; you will find all in Richmond's Tract,—the Memoir of the African Convert. It was delightful, it was charming, it was almost paradisaical.

"From Benbridge, I returned through Yaverland,—where is a small, old church, in which Richmond commenced his ministry, and preached his first sermon as a pastor,—and through Sandown, and hurried back to Newport, just in time to take some refreshment and secure a passage to Cowes and Southampton, where I arrived at a little before sunset, and found myself thoroughly exhausted with fatigue and excitement,—so exhausted, after a day of constant, soul-subduing interest, as to suffer a serious reaction, and fall, for an hour, deeply into unmeaning sadness. It was, indeed, a long hour before I came to myself so as to rebuke this spirit, and then reading a sweet psalm, and offering up a short but heartfelt prayer of praise and thanksgiving, of confidence and love to my heavenly Father, I laid myself quietly down, and slept peacefully and delightfully till morning. The next day I took the coach for London, and after a pleasant ride through scenes of unfailing interest and instructive entertainment, I arrived here in eight hours, and was again in joyful company with my

friend and travelling companion, Mr. Stowe, who had reached the city two days before, and taken lodgings for himself and me at this inn."

"LONDON, July 20, 1836.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"Of the outside of things I have seen considerable, and have visited, among other interesting objects, the British Museum, Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's church, the Tunnel under the Thames, &c., &c., and have attended one popular meeting in Exeter Hall, and spent one evening in the House of Commons, and but for the rain should have spent this evening in the House of Peers. I do not think, however, that great men here, notwithstanding their great titles, are essentially greater than great men in a land where we acknowledge neither lords temporal nor lords spiritual.

"I hope you are all very well and comfortable, and though I cannot at present see your face nor hear your voice, I know there is a sympathy of desires, and I doubt not these desires often mingle together before the throne of him who sees and hears us both. I love to think of your stated seasons of devotion, and, making allowance for the difference of time,—about four hours,—to join with you in the morning and evening sacrifice at the family altar. If we are all permitted to meet there again in health and comfort, I am sure it will be a moment of gratitude and praise. But what is before us we know not. Let us not be too anxious for the future, and never distrustful of the kind providence which has hitherto taken care of us. I have been much favored and preserved from disasters on my voyage and tour, and if I am not yet

freed from disease and confirmed in health, I can, however, find much in the recollections of every day, to inspire my heart with thankfulness and to increase my faith. I desire to be less and less solicitous about results, and to throw myself entirely upon the care of him who careth for me, and who will accomplish his own purposes of love in his own wisest and best way. If he has any service for me to perform in the church, he will give me health and opportunity, and then I shall rejoice to perform it. If not, he will in the best possible manner, and by the easiest and most effectual means, prepare me for the place for which he designs me in that world where the 'inhabitant shall not say, I am sick.' "

" HALLÉ, Germany, Sept. 12, 1836.

" MY REVERED AND BELOVED MOTHER,

" I cannot persuade myself to let this day pass by, without snatching a few moments from the hurried scenes of a rapid and extensive journey, to sit down and think of home, and converse awhile with those whom I love there,—with her who gave me birth. I doubt not I shall be remembered there to-day, and be talked of and prayed for by those who often follow in imagination, with affection and hope, him who is far, far away. Little did I ever expect to keep my thirty-fifth birth day in the heart of Europe, in the centre of Germany, among a people whose language I can neither speak nor understand, while vast plains and hills and a wide ocean separate between me and the scenes of my childhood, the place where I first saw the light. But the ways of Providence have long been to me strange, and their developments unanticipated. I have indeed been 'led in a way that I knew not,' and of what is

before me now I cannot even form a conjecture. But it is enough that he 'who leadeth Joseph like a flock,' will lead me; he who 'feedeth the ravens,' will feed me; he who 'clothe the lily,' will clothe me; he who 'taketh care of oxen' and of 'the sparrows,' will take care of me. To-day completes the thirty-fifth year of my life, and if ever I am to do any thing in the world it must be soon. The past looks to me like one confused, bewildering waste. It has passed like a dream, and left only the impression of a dream behind. Yet in looking back, I cannot but see and acknowledge many blessings, many comforts, many favors, which mark the goodness of God and the kindness of those whom he has made my friends. There are many things in my past history, which seem to indicate that God has yet a purpose to accomplish by me in this world, and which he will make known in his own best time and way. He has upheld me through a long scene of weakness and suffering and disease, has raised me up when I seemed to be sinking into the grave; and he still supports me, and gives, I think, growing strength and improving health; and though I am sometimes desponding, I am, on the whole, well sustained by the buoyancy of hope. I trust, therefore, that he will still keep me in 'all the way in which I go,' and conduct me safely through this journey, and bring me back to my home in safety, with health enough to make me comfortable in myself and a comfort to my friends, and to enable me to labor in his service, and be a blessing to the church and the world. I think I have at least stronger and more definite and fixed purposes of usefulness, and shall be able, perhaps, to use to better advantage the little strength that is given to me.

"Since I sat down, the servants have been in, talking like

so many blackbirds, and as Mr. Stowe has gone out, I am left alone to manage with them as I can. It would be amusing to you to hear this confusion of tongues, and to see the strange gestures and contortions which such interviews occasion. We left London three weeks ago to-morrow morning, and came by steamboat to Hamburg, and from thence, by Schnell Port, to Berlin; saw there professors Mahaincke, Hengstenberg, and several other professors and distinguished men; the king also, and the crown prince, and a few of the most interesting objects of the place. From Berlin we came by the vetturino, or sort of private hackney-coach, to Wittemberg, where Luther and Melancthon lived, and where they are buried; saw their sepulchres and the room in the old convent where Luther first wrote against the abuses of the pope, &c., &c. From Berlin we came, last Friday, to Halle,—saw Gesenius and Tholuck and a few other professors. We saw professor Tholuck in his study and in his parlor, walked with him, dined with him, took tea with him, and loved and admired him. As soon as Mr. Stowe has finished his business in Leipzig, we intend to journey on directly to Paris, and thence to London, and take the packet-ship for New York. I have been hitherto much gratified with my visit to Germany, and shall I think hereafter have a better opinion of German people and of German literature. Yet there is much here, and in England, too, to excite commiseration, and make the philanthropist sad.”

Mr. Stearns completed “a rapid but very interesting journey through a considerable part of Germany,” and arrived in Paris about the first of October. His own inclination, and many circumstances connected with his health, made it desirable that he should visit and pass the winter in the south of

Europe. He had, however, made his arrangements to set sail for America, in the course of a few weeks. Just at this time, he fell in company with Rev. Edward E. Salisbury and lady, who were about to start on a tour, through Marseilles, Geneva and Florence, to Rome. He was persuaded, by the generous and affectionate interest which they expressed in his welfare, to take a seat with them in their private carriage, with the expectation of leisurely and pleasant travelling, or rest, during the winter, among the works of taste and the classic antiquities of Italy. In their society, who were to him as a brother and sister to the last, his spirits were kept cheerful, and his health seemed rapidly to improve.

After announcing his decision to remain in Europe through the winter, he writes: "I hope to return in the spring, hale and hearty, ready for work. My health, though improved, is not entirely restored. I am much more comfortable, have much more power of action and endurance, but the disease is not entirely removed, and to return home to our cold climate just at the commencement of winter, might be hazardous."

Having given a sprightly account of his mode of travelling, and the pleasures of the first day's ride with his new companions, he proceeds: "In the evening, we reached Fontainebleau, formerly the residence of the kings of France, and still a favorite resort of the royal family during a part of the summer and autumnal months. The palace is famous in French history, and memorable for some of the most interesting scenes in the reign of Buonaparte. It was here that he first announced to Josephine his intended divorce. It was here that he himself abdicated the throne of France. We saw the table on which he signed his abdication, and a fac simile of the abdication

itself, the original of which was written with his own hand. We saw too, and walked over the court where he bade farewell to his soldiers, embraced his old companions in arms, kissed the royal standard, and leaped into his carriage to go to the Isle of Elbe. We stayed long enough at Fontainebleau to visit the chief apartments of the palace. The royal family had just left it; the brands were still on the hearth and the furniture not all taken down.

“My travelling, hitherto, has been too rapid, too fatiguing, too exciting, and has subjected me to too much exposure to afford me the highest benefit. Yet I have endured wonderfully, and under all the circumstances have been gaining. I am almost afraid to tell you, that in coming from Strasburg to Paris, we rode *three nights* and nearly three days, without stopping save to swallow a hasty meal or change horses. On the continent, one is often obliged to travel by night. The Diligences usually start just at night, and always go night and day, till they reach their destination; if you stop by the way, it is a chance if you can be taken up again. Besides, my friend is too much in a hurry for this. We *have*, however, generally taken another mode of conveyance, more slow, but more independent. I have not space to describe this *mode* now, but only that in every large town in Germany there are ‘*Johnkutchers*’ (hackney-coachmen), who are ready to undertake to carry you to any part of the kingdom, in a close carriage, like a hackney-coach, with two horses, for a moderate compensation. And as we were a party of three, and it suited our convenience better, we usually travelled in this way.

“I should like to give you some account of my journey through Germany. It has been to me a very interesting,



amusing country, entirely new, or rather so very old as to have all the effect of novelty; a country, too, associated with the most interesting history of the church; with chivalry and with the crusades; with Popery in all its magnificence, and with the Reformation. I visited the most interesting scenes of Luther's life, have seen his grave and that of Melancthon, &c. &c. The houses and the habits of the people, their lands and every thing about the country, are peculiar. Perhaps I shall have leisure soon to give you some account of Deutchland, as they call it."

"MONTAUBAN, Oct. 25, 1836.

"MY DEAR SISTER,

"I wrote from Paris to ———, the 8th instant, a hurried letter which I hope is now floating on the ocean, pursuing its steadfast, though perilous way, from wave to wave, across the wide waters, and destined soon to reach my native shores and be gathered up by a brother's hand. I had written a few days previously to ———, enclosing one for mother, and in these have given my friends some general information of my course, and of the change of my plans, and apprised them of my purpose to remain, the coming winter, on this side the great deep. I hope they will all safely reach you before Thanksgiving, and that you will then all, in health and comfort, unite with grateful hearts in devout acknowledgments of the goodness of our heavenly Father, who has so kindly taken care of us, and so highly blessed our family, and whom we *all* now professedly hope to love.

"The next morning after I wrote to C——, Mr. Stowe left me, and set out on his journey for England. It was just

four months that day, since we came on board the *Montreal*. We had passed together a long pilgrimage, and through many scenes of most exciting interest, and now we must part, each one to go his own way, and not without sad and melting emotions."

TO REV. J——— L———.

"Hotel des Empereurs, Rue de la Canebrière, }  
"MARSEILLES, Nov. 9, 1836. }

"MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

"Your very affectionate and agreeable letter of the 20th of August, was received evening before last. It came by way of London and Paris, and had been a few days waiting my arrival at this place. It is probably the last that is designed for me by my friends at home, during my absence in Europe. Had I sailed according to my original plan and expectation, it would have been lost. The reception of it, at this time, is the more grateful to my feelings, as it is the last I may expect, till there has been time for my letters of the 1st of October, to reach home, and for others to be returned in reply. It seems a long time to wait for intelligence from home, but I trust that he who rules the winds will waft the little sheet safely over the wave, to my native shores, and send favoring breezes to hasten other messengers of love, that will be quickly despatched to greet the wanderer in a foreign land.

"I do not doubt that I am often remembered, as you kindly suggest, and often made the subject of remark in the little family circle. I know not what relation or connection there may be between the thoughts of friends at a distance from each other, but I seem often to know that you are thinking and talking about me. By day and by night, awake and

asleep, I have many such sympathizing and delightful interviews. It would, I think, be amusing, could our fancied conversations be actually repeated to each other. I often stroll out alone, and always when I can get an opportunity, to indulge myself without interruption, and without restraint, in such communion of souls. Then I station myself upon some favoring eminence, and taking my latitude and longitude, and making allowance, too, for the globular form of the earth, I point my finger westward and *downward*, and say, there is Boston, and there is Bedford; there is the old mansion, with mother and M——, and C——, and A—— C——, and Mr. L——; there is the little meeting-house, the refuge of the ‘persecuted but not forsaken,’—there is aunt B——’s, with aunt and her sons,—Mr. M——, and little E——, dear little thing,—and there, embowered among the old elms and apple-trees, is uncle L——’s, where I have spent many a happy birth-day afternoon,—and then I see how you are all dressed, and how you look, and what you are doing;—and I feel how you do, and then I think your thoughts, and my heart moves with your emotions; and I seem to be one of you, to be sympathizing and talking with you; and who can say I am not? Sir,—to him who denies it,—‘there are more things than are *dreamed of in your philosophy*.’

“And you will not think it strange, that ‘I long for you all, making remembrance of you always, in every prayer of mine.’ You will not think it strange that, among others, I have a standing petition for my ‘mother and sisters, the little family under the paternal roof,’—for ‘the church and people of my native village, and for him who ministers to them in sacred

things.' There may be danger, that a uniform petition may degenerate into a mere form ; but where the desire is uniform, and always upon my heart, and in my thoughts, why should it not have a uniform utterance? You are, then, certainly remembered, and more than once each day. But Saturday evening, and Sabbath day, as you seem to know, are the most precious seasons. It is then that I am always with you, and of you. It is then that I always calculate the time, and know the hour of your evening repast, and of your evening devotions,—for the sun does not now sink below your horizon, till about six hours after it has withdrawn from my parting gaze, and left me only the consolation, that it has gone to make an evening visit to my friends at home, to cheer them with its mellow light, and to remind them, in the quiet musings which it induces, of him who is far, far away. The Saturday evening has now become still more interesting, and more sacred, since I became associated with Mr. and Mrs. S——, who have kindred feelings, and with whom, after talking of home, and reading a chapter in the Letter Book of our heavenly Father, it is a pleasure to unite in social prayer. We thus hallow the hour, and welcome the Sabbath, and consecrate for ourselves the day, which is here so awfully desecrated by all around us. And then again on Sabbath day,—your Sabbath morning,—we love to take sweet counsel with you, and walk to the house of God in company."

"Hotel des Empereurs, Rue de la Canebrière, }  
 "MARSEILLES, Nov. 10, 1886. }

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

'Where'er I roam, whatever realms I see,  
 My heart, untravelled, still returns to thee.'

"It returns,—not every day only;—it returns almost every hour; as the dove, from a short, circuitous flight, returns as soon as its wing is weary, to its cote, and to its mate. It returns, and all the heartfelt scenes of infancy and boyhood and early youth throng around its meeting. And although the rough, chill blasts of a fitful, disappointing world,—a world that has been cursed for sin,—have, sometimes, smote it, and scattered the foliage of its most delicate affections on the rude tempest-breeze, it still remains, firm as the mountain oak, which suffers its green leaves to be seared and torn away, while it struggles with the winter's storm, but whose roots are all the while growing stronger and striking deeper, and preparing to put forth a more luxuriant and verdant growth, when the mild, warm air of spring shall breathe upon it its more genial influences. I trust, should a more balmy air revisit it, my heart will not be found blighted and wasted at its root. The spirit of olden times often springs afresh, and with new and increasing vigor. Home, and all connected with it, is an object of constant and ever-growing interest.

'Dear is that schoolboy spot,  
 We ne'er forget, though there we are forgot.'

"But there I am not forgot,—and dear is the brother who shared with me the pastimes of schoolboy days, and all the thrilling scenes, the joys and sorrows of the schoolboy spot. The scenes, too, of our journeyings in the wilderness, and by the

cataract, were well fitted to strengthen those attachments ; and the little rose leaf, which found its way across the wild waves of the broad Atlantic, brought in upon my soul a flood of recollections, and swelled it with a high tide of emotions. Precious little leaf ! I shall preserve it, as an emblem of a love, which can no more fade and no more wilt, which could not and cannot die ! \* Every day presents some object which reminds of what we saw or felt, when wandering together along the river, and by the lake, and among the mountains. Every thing which one sees of peculiar interest, in a strange land, recalls some likeness among objects familiar to him in his own. It was so common, while travelling in Germany, to say of every thing pleasing,—‘That is beautiful,’—or ‘that is grand,’—it is *like* the valley of the Connecticut,—it is *like* the wheat-fields of the Seneca and Cayuga,—or it is *like* the hills of Brookline,’—or to like it to some other object dear to an American heart,—that our German friend and fellow-traveller, the

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\* The brother to whom this letter was directed, plucked a rose which bloomed upon the *Terrapin rocks*, in the summer of 1835. It overhung the cataract, and drank the spray, and seemed to be listening to the thunders of the awful flood. The rose was preserved between the leaves of a pocket Bible, and, in the autumn of 1836, a single leaf of it was enclosed in a letter, and sent across the Atlantic, to Mr. Stearns who was then travelling in Germany, as a remembrancer of the past and a pledge of fraternal affection for the future. That leaf was sacredly cherished. It attended the traveller in all his wanderings. It was with him during the winter, in Rome. It returned with him, in his journey of sickness and pain, to Paris. It came back, after his death, to the hand which, more than two years before, had gathered it, in the company of this brother, at Niagara. Some may smile, but this little rose leaf, for its precious associations, is now accounted by the possessor at a price “above rubies.”

T—— professor, would sometimes rally a little, and, half sportively, half rebukingly, say, ‘ Ah, yes, that *must be beautiful*, because it is *so like* ! there is nothing beautiful in old Europe, unless it is like something in America. Yes, look there !—is not that *like* !—is not that beautiful !’ But it was not and is not merely the beautiful and sublime, whose power can bring the scenes of the western world across the ocean.

“ I rejoice much with you in your successes as a minister of Christ, in winning souls to him who is the Prince of peace. There is no situation in this wide world so noble, so delightful, as that of a faithful, successful minister of the gospel, surrounded by an affectionate, confiding, peaceful people.”

“ Hotel des Empereurs, Rue de la Canebrière, }  
 “ MARSEILLES, Nov. 12, 1836. }

“ MY DEAR SISTER,

“ I wrote from Montauban about twenty days since, in great haste, as usual, to A—— C——, a confused letter, in which I have given you some indistinct account of our journey from Paris as far as that place,—of our carriage, company, equipage, mode of travelling, &c. Perhaps it will not be uninteresting to you, to receive even an empty list of the most prominent towns, through which we have pursued our way since, that you may be able to follow us on the map. We were then in the midst of the richest and most luxuriant vine country of the south of France. All my gayest fancies, and most delightful Elysian imaginations of this lovely land, were fully sustained, if not fully realized. The weather was fine ; the sky serene, of a soft mild azure, with only here and there a light, mellow cloud, just frequent enough to break the uniform-

ity and prevent the otherwise monotonous aspect of the broad arch above us. The air was pure and balmy and fragrant, as if it just came from the open gates of paradise; and the whole country, cultivated in the highest degree, and clad with vines and fruits, spread before us a scene of more than terrestrial beauty. It seemed difficult to realize that the garden of Eden was laid waste, and that we were now in the open field, in a world which has been cursed for sin. Surely, I thought, the curse has fallen lightly upon us,—it has fallen from an indulgent Father's hand. Shame on our murmurings, our grumblings, our sullenness, our peevishness, our distrust and our discontent,—shame I say on us all! Look at our Father's face and see its smiles, its bright and cheerful and glowing love, as reflected from these sunny hills, and rich, verdant valleys! Our course from Bourdeaux lay along the banks of the Garonne. As we left Tonneins that morning, disgusted with dirty chambers, and complaining, with empty stomachs, of the ill-served fare which the inert and self-indulgent inmates of the hotel had offered for our repast the preceding evening, the scenery spread out before us by paternal hands seemed to look upon us with an expression of mild but overpowering rebuke. Our road ran along close on the verge of the winding Garonne. A thick fog, like that which often rises from the river and rests upon the valley of Connecticut, was rising and spreading like a semi-transparent veil over this silvery stream and the vine-covered valley through which we passed. Our view was limited and softened, but not entirely obscured. The air was moist and cool, but not chilly or depressing. Every thing seemed just fitted to soothe and tranquillize a fevered spirit. At intervals, along the road side, and in front of some



humble cottage, we saw groups of men and women, with smiling faces and sprightly limbs, busily and briskly employed in securing their abundant harvests, and most of them at this time in getting out their hemp,—the men and women both gleesomely engaged in the same occupation. It was beautiful to see the flourish of the long, rich plant, as the vigorous arm of the peasants threw it high in the air, making a sweep around their uncovered heads, with a playful motion that seemed only the unsuppressed action of their own buoyant hearts. Clusters of the tall plant from which we obtain our floss silk, were springing at unequal distances along the road side, and which in their appearance realized to us our ideas of the sugar-plant,—while the vine, which is usually kept closely pruned and carefully trained upon poles, giving to a vineyard an appearance not unlike that of a large field of low pole-beans, was here suffered to luxuriate in all its natural richness, and, entwining itself among the boughs of the trees (which are every where in France set along the sides of the highways), threw its graceful branches far over the road, almost embowering our path. As the misty curtain which enveloped us sometimes parted, as if drawn aside, giving us an opening through which we might catch for a moment a more distant and distinct view, it revealed to us not only the smooth bright surface of the river on our right, but here and there a lofty hill on our left, half covered with vines, tipped with shrubs and evergreens, and not unfrequently bearing upon its highest summit the imposing massive walls of an ancient ‘chateau’ or castle.

“Having refreshed ourselves at Agen, we rode on through a country and scenes quite similar to those I have described, except that the morning mist had risen and parted into beau-

tiful forms, and rolled away before the noonday sun, and was succeeded by a bright, congenial, unclouded atmosphere. At the little village of Malauze, where we stopped, at about four o'clock, to change horses, I proposed to Mr. S——, in the mean time, to walk on a short distance, and enjoy the free air and unobstructed view which the present opportunity afforded. We left our company and carriage in the narrow valley of this sequestered village, and walked quickly forward, ascending a hill to the height of a hundred feet, and then observing on our side, just by the road, an abrupt, lofty cliff, which seemed to promise a full view of the surrounding country, Mr. S—— instantly, upon my suggestion, sprang upon its side, and in a moment we were scrambling together up its steep ascent, first along the steps of a terraced vineyard, and then, at the extremity of this path, clambering up, on our hands and feet, until we gained the top, at a height of two hundred feet above the road, and three hundred feet above the spot where our carriage was still seen waiting. Our anticipations were not disappointed, and we found ourselves richly rewarded for our almost breathless toil. Beneath us lay the rich valley of the Garonne, through which this broad, placid river was winding its unobstructed way, and reflecting from its smooth surface a light which told only of purity and peace. Opposite to us rose a rugged hill, on the top of which stood, in solemn grandeur, the broken but still firm and seemingly imperishable walls of a very ancient and ruined castle. Every where around us, in tasteful combinations, were plains and hills, richly clad with vines and loaded with clusters of purple and green grapes, beautifully contrasted and studded with villages, churches, villas, cottages and palaces,—presenting at once a

scene of grandeur and beauty, the most enchanting. I felt my bosom rising and expanding with emotion, as if my soul were growing and becoming enlarged and elevated at the view. I could not but think for the moment, that the arch-tempter had displayed the utmost of his infernal wisdom, when he placed the meek and unambitious Saviour of the world upon a high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and said, 'All these will I give thee,' &c. Or rather, in sympathy with a favorite poet, I exclaimed at once, 'Creation's heir, the world, the world is mine.' Or better still, with something, I trust, of the spirit of the Christian poet, my heart glowed with the sentiment, and found utterance in the language, which he has attributed to every 'freeman whom the truth makes free:'

'He looks abroad into the varied fields  
Of nature, and though poor, perhaps, compared  
With those whose mansions glitter in his sight,  
Calls the delightful scenery all his own.  
His are the mountains, and the valleys his,  
And the resplendent rivers. His to enjoy  
With a propriety that none can feel,  
But who with filial gratitude inspired,  
Can lift to heaven an unpretentious eye,  
And, smiling, say,—My Father made them all.'

"Regaining the carriage, our way was still through this most delightful country. As we rode on, the vine-clad hills still rose and spread themselves before us in every variety of form and combination,—with an aspect altogether peculiar,—sloping and rolling and mingling, like the folds of an imperial robe. A little further on, in a broad, lovely valley, lay the town of Moissac; we had scarcely passed it, when the sun set in all his glory, and the full moon rose upon us. Directly,

as we passed a little village on our left, the vespers were heard from its church-tower, announcing, in sweet music, the close of the day, and calling the villagers to rest. But I forbear, and remember that I have scarcely written you a word of what I promised. To the purpose, then :—we passed that night at Montauban, and the next day came to Toulouse ; thence to Carcassonne, Narbonne, Montpellier. We do not always have sunny days, and we rode into Montpellier in a snow-storm. Thence to Nismes, to Avignon, to Aix, and to Marseilles. The country, too, is not all a vineyard ; we have passed through scenes on this route, as rocky, wild and barren as any part of New Hampshire or Scotland. The vineyards have now chiefly given place to olives and almonds and figs. We have had grapes upon our table till I am tired of them ; we have them still, and figs too, fresh from the trees. We expect to set out again on our journey to Italy on Monday or Tuesday. I hope I shall soon feel more at leisure, and more composed, that I may think and write calmly, and not, as now, mar every thing I touch.”

“ GENOA, Dec. 4, 1836.

“ MY DEAR SISTER,

“ Of the few letters which I have received since I left home, the longest and not the least agreeable was from a sister, whose unfailing fidelity and kind attentions, always prompt, always free, cheerful and delicate, have given her no inferior place in my affections. I need not say, that I love my sisters, and remember gratefully their many kind offices. I love the home of my childhood, and my retreat, in later years, during many a storm, and many a lowering day.

"We left Nice last Wednesday morning, and arrived in Genoa on Saturday. Our route from Nice lay along the shores of the Mediterranean, and at the foot of the maritime Alps, or of the Apennines. The scenery is most beautiful, grand and romantic. The road winds around the capes and coves, the harbors and promontories, and is carried along upon the side of a deep declivity, often upon the verge of a precipice, and sometimes at the height of fifteen hundred or two thousand feet above the level of the sea. You look up, and over you hangs a mountain of rock,—you look down, and at the bottom of a deep abyss the waves are breaking just under your feet. This road was begun by Buonaparte, and was finished but a few years since. It is one of the most stupendous works of art which have been undertaken by the enterprise of men. The solid rock has in some places been cut down at least two or three hundred feet on one side, and a wall or terrace built up a corresponding height on the other. As you look along at a distance upon these rugged hills, standing out even into the waters of the sea, it seems impossible that human beings should here ever find a passage. And yet for the most part, we rolled on upon a path as smooth as a bowling-green. Sometimes the road descends to a level with the sea, and runs along upon the beach, and across the beds of rivers, which we were obliged to ford, because the waters of these mountain streams are in some seasons so rapid that it is almost impossible to make a bridge that will stand. And then, again, it rises suddenly to the giddy height of the mountain summit, or assumes its more uniform elevation. In a few places it passes directly *through* the hill, by a tunneled way. In one place, we rode through a subterranean gallery of five

hundred feet in length, and emerged at a short turn on a lofty cliff overhanging the sea, as if we were about to leap into its foaming billows ; yet we passed in safety, and suffered not the slightest accident. He who lifted up the mountains, and shut up the sea with bars, bore us along in his hand. In passing over the rocky cape of Capo Zeppo, on Friday evening, the road is so narrow and steep, that we were obliged to alight and walk a mile or two ; and the descent is so precipitous that a carriage can only pass in a zigzag course, of seven or eight traverses, while the hind wheels are locked, four or five men holding on to retard and direct its movements. At the bottom of this mountain, lies the town of Finale, just on the sea-shore, where we arrived a little after night-fall and took lodgings in a miserable inn for the night. The floors of our rooms were of coarse, dirty brick, without any rag of a carpet and a miserable apology for a fire-place. Rightly named, thought I, rightly named *Finale*,—and truly I never felt so much as if I was at the *end* of the world. However, by the help of burnt vinegar and cologne, we made our condition quite tolerable, obtained some sleep, and rose early the next morning, to continue our journey under a bright and clear sky, and a balmy, inspiriting air, and through scenes of absorbing beauty and grandeur. At the small village of Cogoletto, on our way, we were shown the house where it is said and believed Christopher Columbus was born. Be this as it may, we are certainly now in *Genoa*,—a place which his name has made interesting to every intelligent inhabitant of the *new world* which he discovered. We shall probably remain here a day or two, and then go on towards Florence, where we purpose to stay two or three weeks, and afterwards to go to Rome.

"We are now in a land of vines and olives, of figs and pomegranates. The vintage and the harvest have indeed past,—but oranges and lemons are both blossoming and ripening in the gardens, and roses are blooming fresh as in June; although at a little distance the bare summits of the Alps are seen, white with snow. Yet it is not exactly like summer here; the air is chilly and the night cold,—we need a fire constantly. I hope you have a good one, and are sitting happily around it,—all well,—all prosperous. My health is improved and improving. Love to mother, and to all.

"Your affectionate brother,

"SAMUEL H. STEARNS."

"P. S. I have opened my letter after it was folded, on the recollection that it will probably be received sometime in January, 1837,—1837! how rapidly our years are rolling away! But I have opened my letter to *wish you all a happy new year*. Please say to mother and to all, *I wish you all a happy new year!* I remember, too, that it is just twenty years this day since my good father took me into his chaise and carried me to Andover, to place me in the academy, to begin my studies preparatory to college and to the ministry; and I have only to hope another year may find me in the work. O, how I shall rejoice in it! My dear sister, I wish you again a happy new year!"

## CHAPTER VII.

## EXTRACTS FROM HIS NOTE BOOK.—LETTERS.

“ *Dec. 9, 1836.*—We soon crossed the boundary of Lucca, passed the last custom-house, and were fairly within the limits of Tuscany, looking earnestly for our resting-place for the night, more earnestly to catch a glimpse, before total darkness should preclude the sight, of an object which our infant imagination had seen and admired,—when, lo! the towers, the dome, the churches, and the palaces of Pisa. Here stood, the ‘leaning tower.’ It was no illusion. Here it stood actually before our eyes, leaning just as it has always leaned, before the ‘mind’s eye,’ since the moment when we first saw it in our nursery. We gazed upon it with silence, and with throbbing hearts, till the thickening mist and the growing darkness of the night veiled it from our eyes still fixed to see. It was not long, however, before we passed the massive gates, and were within the ancient walls of venerable Pisa.

“ *Dec. 14.*—This morning, at 8½ o’clock, we left Pisa and the ‘Albergo di ussero,’ with pleasant impressions and recollections, both of the place and our accommodations and entertainment, and commenced, with animating anticipations, the last stage of our journey to Florence, ‘Firenze La Bella,’—the birth place and the home of genius and the arts,—of the beautiful and the grand,—of noble, ingenious and lofty minds. Our route lay along the banks of the Arno, and, with the exception of a



short distance, where the river seems to flow through a narrow pass in a low ridge of the Apennines, the country seemed as an extended level valley from Pisa to Florence. As we passed out of the ancient city, we had little to attract our attention by the way, except a throng of peasants, who were gathering in from the neighboring villages, with their provisions for the market. We admired, as we had done before, whenever we met the peasants of Tuscany, the simplicity of their appearance; their manners and dress, their countenances and expression, all betokening industry, content and rural happiness. We were much amused, also, with their vehicles, which were usually a rude frame, with a kind of loose carpet or sack suspended beneath, for a floor, and with short, stout shafts, attached not to the collar, but to the saddle of the beast that draws it, and upon a level with the top of the saddle, the pommel of which rises four or six inches, and is covered and ornamented all over with large, brass nails.

\* \* \* \* \*

"The day had been lowery, and the shades of evening now began to thicken around us as we entered within the walls of Florence, with silent thoughts and throbbing hearts; and alighted at the Hotel de l'Europe, but recently a palace of one of the noble Florentine families, whom a change of fortune had driven from their home. We were here immediately conducted into spacious and resplendent apartments, all lighted and warmed for our reception.

"*Dec. 15.*—At Florence. Was awaked this morning, at a very early hour, by the piercing sounds of the church bells ringing their matins. They began at five o'clock, and continued ringing in full chorus till six; when the street before my

chamber echoed with the thick trampling of feet, moving to the consecrated place of public devotion. Surely these Catholics seem exemplary in the observance of their own established forms of godliness, however they may deny the power.

\* \* \* \* \*

"*Dec. 17.*—Went out immediately after breakfast, this morning, to commence our regular sight-seeing business for the day. Our first visit was to the church of Santa Croce,—the 'Poet's corner' of the Florentines. It is a venerable building of the thirteenth century, by Arnolfo Lapo. It is very plain in its exterior, without towers or dome. The *façade*, which is unfinished, is of plain brick, designed to be cased with marble, which has never been laid, except two or three partial courses at the base. Over the front door is a large, round, painted window. We were conducted into it by a long, narrow cloister of the convent, to which it belongs. On each side of us and beneath our feet were monuments of the dead. Every step was upon a marble slab, covered with an inscription, commemorative of those whose dust reposes beneath. At the extreme end of this cloister is a door, communicating with the church, and by which we entered. On the left of this door, within the south transept, is a small enclosed chapel, Dei cavalcanti, containing a few monuments, with two figures, and the crucifixion in wood, by Doratello, and regarded as works of some merit. As they were not very carefully noticed, or for some other reason, they did not make a very strong impression on my mind, I will attempt no account of them. On the opposite side, at the extreme end of the northern transept, is a similar chapel, Dei Nicolini, containing statues of Moses and Aaron, of Prudence, Humility and

Chastity,—that of Aaron, which represents him in a meditating posture, is very fine, the drapery exceedingly rich. Humility is beautifully conceived, and well executed.

“There are, also, upon the ceiling of this chapel, some frescoes, worthy of notice, especially four sybils, which fill the circles between the windows. The general aspect of this church, in the interior, is solemn and imposing, though not beautiful. It is nearly of basilical form, and of Greco-Gothic style. It consists of a nave and side aisles, separated by large painted arches, resting on octagonal piers, with Corinthian pilasters of very rude workmanship. The columns are of gray, milaceous sandstone, and the arches and piers are colored in imitation of it. Narrow, high, painted windows, admitting only a dim light, throw a sombre hue over the dark and heavy walls and arches and pillars of this solemn edifice. The roof both of the nave and side aisles displays the beams and joists, and, without any covering or ornament, is painted with the rest of the building. The church derives its interest from the monuments and ashes of the noble dead which it contains. Here rests, at last, the dust of the much injured Galileo, which was first buried in the open square of unconsecrated ground in front of the church, and which was, not without much opposition, removed by his family to its present resting-place, almost a century after his decease. His monument, which is of marble, exhibits his bust resting on his sarcophagus, which is supported by two images representing Astronomy and Geometry. But neither the design nor the execution of it made any very favorable impression on my mind. The ashes of the great and good man alone, however, are sufficient to make any spot sublime.

“Opposite to this is the monument of another, scarcely less great, equally amiable, and with whose memory our associations are more exclusively agreeable. The dust of Michael Angelo here rests, in a sarcophagus surmounted with his bust, which is said to be an excellent likeness, and supported at each end and in front by a mourning figure, representing Sculpture, Painting and Architecture. Above the monument is a small fresco, said to be painted by Michael Angelo himself; it is generally admired.

“As in the case of Galileo, however, it is the dust of Michael Angelo that hallows the spot. Although ‘Dante sleeps afar,’ his monument, in this church, is one of the finest that adorns this holy place. It is of pure white marble,—a sarcophagus, surmounted with a statue of the poet. On the pedestal, are two large, beautifully shaped images, one bowed down, in the attitude and with the expression of sorrow; the other erect, and ascribing honor to the greatest poet. Near this is a monument of Alfieri, by Canova. It is of a design, somewhat similar, but of oval forms, and it is not well conceived, nor successful.

“At a little distance is the tomb of Machiavelli. The monument, which is esteemed ‘a noble specimen of simple and chaste composition,’ consists of the statue of the historian and politician, reclining on his sarcophagus and weighing a sword against a roll of paper. There are, also, many other fine monuments of men more or less great and worthy, but which as I passed them without any particular observation, I must now pass without any description.

“The church of Santa Croce is a place to inspire one with awe and reverence, and to raise in his breast emotions pure

and elevated. It is said that Alfieri first felt the love of glory, while walking in the sanctuary where he is now buried. From these holy precincts, we turned, to visit, for a moment, the ancient government house, and where, as is said, in chambers connected by subterranean passages with Santa Croce, the dark tribunal of the Inquisition was held. It is now converted into a prison, and we were assured, that all the memorials of olden time had long since been removed. I know not why or how it was, but our curiosity and desire to see the awful spot were not encouraged; and we drove away to visit objects more agreeable to our sensibilities. We visited the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, 'founded by the grand duke, Leopold, in 1764;' and still under ducal patronage. Our object was to see some of its splendid specimens of Mosaic,—to examine the materials of this most beautiful art, and to observe the process, by which its productions are wrought. In all respects we were highly gratified. We saw a fine collection of precious stones, in their different stages of preparation, and very neatly arranged,—we had a good opportunity to watch the progress of the work, as well as to become acquainted with the method of the art; and we saw, also, some exquisite specimens, among which was a table for the duke and which employed six men four years, and is valued at ten thousand dollars. Its centre is composed of a bunch of flowers and fruit.

"*Florence, Dec. 27.*—We observed this morning a new scene, which yet seemed familiar to us, and recalled our thoughts to our own dear homes,—our native land. The storm, which had begun yesterday with violent rain, had terminated with snow, which now covered the streets and the roofs of the buildings, three or four inches thick. It was, indeed,

very moist and fast melting away. Still it was snow,—and as the dissolving element descended in profuse drippings from the eaves of the houses, or was splashed into the centre of the streets from the doors and sidewalks by the busy inhabitants, or lay along by the walls, as it had been tossed into heaps, it made us feel as if we had been suddenly transported into the streets of Boston or of New York, while the chill mountain wind, and the distant hills, discerned along the openings of the river, glistening with their fresh, white covering, realized to our imaginations the vivid scenes and transporting associations of a winter in New England. \* \* \* \* \*

“PALACE PITTI.—The first object to greet my attention, was my favorite piece, by Andre del Santo, of Christ at the Tomb. It looked even more lovely than when I saw it first. The sweetness and simplicity and tenderness of affection, sustained by a noble sense of truth and propriety, were the same, but seemed more full, and, if possible, more deep and permanent, while the firmness and correctness of the drawing and delicacy of coloring, were all in harmony with the calm, touching scene, and the characters it represents. The shades and folds of the drapery of a young female form, clad in a pink robe, are exquisitely soft and delicate and harmonious. Just by this picture, I recognised another friend, whom I smiled to see, a Holy Family, by the same artist. Like that which I have just noticed, it seemed more beautiful than when I saw it at first. The expression and the whole appearance of the little children is exceedingly lovely, with all the simplicity and playfulness of nature; while the maternal look of the mother, her affectionate watchfulness and fidelity and tender concern, combined with strong good sense, subdues the soul. One

would love here to linger around the Tomb of Jesus, or to dwell in the Holy Family. I would that I knew more of the favorite artist who has charmed my feelings and won my esteem. He seems to me to be among painters what Goldsmith is among poets,—always correct, always chaste, always sensible, always affecting, while he often ‘snatches a grace beyond the reach of art.’

“But I began to feel that I was spending too much time among objects with which I was already somewhat familiar, and I hastened into the hall of Mars,—a room not unlike those which I have noticed, and containing, like them, thirty or more paintings, of equal or perhaps greater merit. The first object that arrested my attention, and fixed my roving eyes, was a Holy Family, by Raphael. He is the Milton of painters. And this piece surpassed every thing I had before seen or conceived of. The coloring is delicate in the highest degree. The outlines are finely drawn, with freedom and precision. The countenances are nobly conceived, and the expression combines dignity and loveliness, in a manner which I have never seen equalled. The eyes seem to speak, while every feature is full of life and emotion. There is a softness and mellowness and naturalness in the flesh, which it would seem impossible for the pencil to represent. At the same time, Raphael has the faculty of giving to his images the clearness and transparency of alabaster. The infant is, perhaps, the most perfect and interesting figure,—but an air of elegance is thrown over the whole picture. \* \* \* \* \*

“From this room we passed into the saloon of Jupiter,—a room much like the others, and containing about as many paintings. One of the first which attracted my attention, is a

picture by Michael Angelo ; and if I must find for him a parallel among the poets, I should say, he is the Homer of painters. It is a representation of the Fates, and is conceived with wonderful strength, and executed with great boldness and vigor. The figures are three old women, one of whom is drawing out the thread from the distaff, and another stands ready with her shears to cut it off, while the office and occupation of the third I could not so well discern. The countenances are exceedingly expressive, their features sharp, the muscles sunk, the skin withered, and the whole face haggard and wan, and the entire expression eager, determined and intense. Their hands are shriveled, their dress loose and disorganized, and the coloring, corresponding with these forms, throws over the whole a most ghastly, witch-like aspect.

\* \* \* \* \* Like old Homer, Michael Angelo seems to have had a genius, that would love to range among gods and heroes, above the reach of ordinary humanity.

“On the next wall of this room, is a picture of St. Mark, by Frere Bartolommeo. It has strength and dignity and elegance. The outlines are bold, and the coloring chaste, but rich. The expression is vigorous and noble. There is something about this picture, which, to my mind, looks great. It seems done in a style of greatness,—it has an air of uncommon nobleness,—it looks magnanimous.

“As my eyes were roving around upon the pictures on another wall, they were suddenly fixed upon a small portrait of a female, suspended in one corner of the room. I thought there was something peculiar in the picture, and that, perhaps, most people would not be particularly pleased with it. But at the same time, I felt constrained to confess to myself that I was



marvellously interested in it. I turned to the catalogue, not without some apprehension of mortification, to see if the character of its author would sustain the interest I felt in it, when, to my surprise and gratification, I found it was a work of Leonardo da Vinci; the first of the works I have seen of that great and highly cultivated genius. It has some resemblance to the works of Raphael, especially, in its coloring,—perhaps it has some of his faults; but the figure is finely drawn, the colors delicate and chaste, and the expression that of deep, subdued and tranquil, but warm, pure and dignified feeling. This room contains, also, some of the finest specimens of the genius of Salvator Rosa, particularly, a picture of the Conspiracy of Catiline, and a battle,—a war scene,—a striking picture of carnage, passion, fury and wild commotion. They are both quite characteristic. \* \* \* \*

“*Dec. 28.*—With a prospect of being permitted to remain longer in the gallery to-day, we took our breakfast at the usual hour, and then drove directly to the palace. We ascended to the halls without delay, and passed through the first and second saloons, with only a complacent glance of the eye upon the objects which had afforded us so much gratification upon our first introduction. In the third room, the Holy Family della Seggiola not only caught our eyes, but arrested our steps, and held us, for a few moments, bound as by a pleasing spell, before this charming object, which not only captivates the fancy at first sight, but becomes more interesting, the longer it is observed and contemplated. The tender natural affection of the virgin, her deep thoughtfulness, her noble devotion of soul, with an expression of lofty hopes and purposes, which seem to arise from a consciousness of the

dignity of her charge, and a just appreciation of the sacred treasure she holds in her arms ; the artlessness and generosity, and even good sense and large capabilities, which seem already to beam from the face of the infant Saviour ; the more intense emotion of a soul more mature, but less capacious, which gives a pleasing fulness and unity of expression to the countenance of the little worshipper, the infant baptist,—all combine with the beauty of the work itself, to give this picture a power that fascinates and subdues the soul. In the next room, my attention was again arrested, almost upon the threshold, by a sight of the Fates, by Michael Angelo. This is indeed a painting of extraordinary power. It loses nothing of its effect by a second view. The strong expression of these superhuman forms seemed to be drawn in deeper lines, than when I saw it yesterday ;—that haggard face, with half open mouth and broken teeth, and staring eye, and squalid countenance, and eager look of intense emotion and determined purpose, personating a very *gyp* from the infernal world. I seem to see it before me now, frightful as the representation of sin, and horrid as the messenger of death. \* \* \*

“ A portrait of a Poet, by Salvator Rosa, quite delighted me. It has the romantic sublimity, and unity of expression, characteristic of its author. The poet is represented as sitting at his table, which is covered with papers, in seeming disorder, while he is wrapped all around in the thick folds of a large, dark cloak, his head wreathed with laurel, and leaning on his hand, and his mind apparently abstracted and absorbed in deep thoughtfulness, a slight hectic tinge upon his cheek, at the same time indicating the fervor of his imagination, and the intensity of his emotion. \* \* \* \* \*

"We had now finished a hasty view of the fine saloons, distinguished by the names of gods and goddesses, and passed into the adjoining room, called the saloon of the Iliad. It is quite like the others, and furnished in the same manner;—a floor of marble, or stucco, imitating marble; two or three large, superb Mosaic tables, a vaulted roof, with turrets, and ornamented with sculpture, gilded images and frescoes, and the walls hung all around with pictures. The frescoes on the roof are from scenes in the Iliad, and finely done. That on the vaulted arch represents Jupiter, in the assembly of the gods, proposing to them to interfere in the issue of the war between the Greeks and Trojans. The collection of paintings in this room, I do not think equally choice with those we have seen before, but there are a few pieces well worthy of notice.

"The portrait of Salvator Rosa expresses much spirit and vigor of thought, and boldness of conception,—an active, capacious imagination, intense feeling, and determined purpose. A portrait of Andre del Santo is quite characteristic, as is another in a preceding room, which I should have noticed yesterday, representing the painter and his wife. A portrait of a goldsmith by Leonardo da Vinci, is in fine taste,—neat, chaste, but rich and expressive. It evinces the purity and dignity of the author's mind, in a comparatively trivial subject. The head of Moses, by Carlo Dolci, is nobly conceived and happily executed; the drawing is good, the coloring fine, and the expression full of lofty enthusiasm, and calm, meek confidence in the power it seems to be addressing. The Glory of Christ among the Saints is a noble picture, with much grandeur of sentiment and unity of expression. The head of the Saviour, by Titian, is one of the best of the kind I

have ever seen. It is very noble, and the expression divinely pure. I think it should express more determined benevolence, conscious power, and confidence of final triumph.

"*Dec. 29.*—There are two or three pictures, among those which I saw yesterday, which I did not notice last evening, but which I do not wish to forget. There is a painting, by Raphael, of the Vision of Ezekiel. It is strongly conceived, and vividly executed. The prophet is represented as borne up by winged beasts on a cloud, his arms raised and sustained by a cherubim, and an angel also is in attendance by his side. His head is elevated, and his eyes uplifted, fixed, and gazing into heaven, with an expression of enthusiastic, awe-stricken expectancy, naturally inspired by a sudden elevation. A glowing, supernatural light, falling from above and poured profusely around the scene, gives to it an awful splendor and magnificence. A contemplation of this picture excites emotions of undefined, enthusiastic sublimity. \* \* \*

"From the saloon of the Iliad, where my observations terminated yesterday, I passed into the chamber of the education of Jupiter, so called, I believe, like the other rooms, from the design in fresco on the ceiling of its roof. The picture which has interested me most, is a painting of 'St Andrew before his cross,' by Carlo Dolci. It represents two rough looking men raising the rugged cross, before which is the aged, gray-haired saint, kneeling and in the attitude of devotion, while the executioner, attended by two or three others, is stripping him of his robes. The expression of Andrew is that of meekness and fortitude, of kindness and determined purpose, and hope.

"From this chamber I proceeded to the chamber of Ulysses, passing, on my left, a small chamber, elegantly furnished, and

fitted up for bathing. This little bath-room is in a style of exquisite beauty. The floor is composed of precious, inlaid marble. The roof, arched and vaulted, is ornamented with stucco and images in bass-relief, and is supported by four columns of beautiful dark marble, with bases and Corinthian capitals of purest white. A large chandelier, apparently of gold, is suspended from the centre. Four octagonal statues fill niches in the walls, which are also adorned with mirrors, silk tapestry and bass-reliefs. To me, this room had an air of the most refined luxury. But my taste was now for pleasures more intellectual and spiritual.

“In the hall or chamber of Ulysses, the first picture to fix my roving eye, was a representation of Christ in the Garden; and, like the one I have just noticed by Carlo Dolci, it represents the Saviour kneeling beneath a clump of olive trees, and clad in a long pink robe, which hangs gracefully and loosely about him in full rich folds, his hands crossed upon his breast, and his head bowed, in the attitude and with the expression of prayer. Before him, on a dark rock, jutting out from the side of the hill, appears the form of an angel, also kneeling, robed in blue, with wing tinged with gold and amber hues, bearing a cross upon his shoulder, and holding in one hand a cup, which he seems to be offering the Saviour, while a bright golden light flows down from the opening sky above. The figures are finely drawn, and the coloring is exceedingly delicate. There are two pieces in this room, by Salvator Rosa,—one of a landscape, with a ruined castle and a bridge, and another of a landscape, with ruined towers and a sea view,—which are quite characteristic, and which I just mention that I may not forget them. A

demi-figure of St. John, by Andre del Santo, expresses much devotional and affectionate feeling. A head of the Saviour, crowned with thorns, expresses meekness, benevolence, confidence and firm endurance, mingled with extreme agony. It is by Carlo Dolci. There is a painting, by Salvator Rosa, of the Temptation of St. Andrew, representing the saint as prostrate and almost overpowered by frightful demons. It is a dark, wild, awe-striking picture.

“In the chamber of Justice, the first object that fixed my attention was the Temptation of Jerome, by Vosaci. This saint is represented as kneeling before his table, on which rests a crucifix and a human skull, and beneath the table couches a lion. Over the saint, a cupid is represented in the air, driving an arrow at his head; while behind him is a female form, perhaps a Venus, holding an infant in her arms, and leading a little child by the hand, apparently just coming quickly around him and oversetting a candle, in the haste and carelessness of the movement. There is also here, a painting of saint Dominic, in prayer in a corner, by C. Dolci. Dominic is kneeling, with raised head and fixed eyes, with all the expression of fervent, intense devotion, and agonizing prayer,—while before him, a gleam of lurid light seems to flash up from the infernal world, revealing hideous spectres rushing forward to destroy the saint; and at the same time a bright, mild, soft light flows down from above, opening hope and winning a steadfast, upward gaze. There are several portraits and other pictures, in this and other rooms which I have seen to-day, by Carlo Dolci, all having, I think, his characteristics,—fine drawing, rich but delicate coloring, and tender, full toned sentiment.

“The next room is the chamber of Flora, and contains but one

picture that I will notice. It is also by C. Dolci,—St. John in Patmos. He is represented as reclining on a ledge or cliff of huge, dark, rugged rocks ; the sea in view before him,—a large eagle resting on a stone near his feet,—a great fiery, flying dragon, with many heads, seems rising out of the deep,—and above, in the open sky, appears an angel, surrounded with a halo of glory, and bright, glowing, heavenly light. But the principal object of interest in this room, is a sculpture in marble,—the famous Venus de Canova. A charming figure indeed it is,—a simple expression of chaste, sensitive, timid and shrinking female beauty. That graceful position,—those fine flowing outlines of form and limbs,—that nicely turned ankle,—those delicate, tapering fingers,—the gentle bend of the waist, as the hand is folded on the breast,—the round, full, smooth muscles,—the delicately turned shoulders and neck,—all combine to form a most exquisite image of physical beauty ; for this, indeed, I think, is all,—no noble sentiment, no high thought, nothing spiritual, scarcely any expression in the face,—but physical beauty in form and outline, unequalled by any thing I have ever seen or conceived.

“ Returning to the chamber of Prometheus, a door on the left opens into a small room, called gallery of Paccetti, I think, from the name of the painter who painted the frescoes. It is the last of the halls of painting,—the end of the gallery. It contains but few pictures, and only one which I will notice. It is by Tiarini Alexandre, of Bologna,—Adam and Eve weeping over the dead body of Abel. The parents seem distracted with sorrow, consternation and horror. Death was new to them ; and the death of a son, and by a son’s murderous hand,—the scene was awful, incomprehensible ;—they are

overpowered. Their expression is that of maniacs, frightened and frightful.

"We now took our leave of these enchanting rooms, I am sure, with many regrets that we could not indulge the hope of soon visiting them again, and long shall we remember the pleasant and I hope profitable hours we have spent in the PALACE PITTI. The remainder of the day was given to reading, relaxation, and repose,—and the evening has been spent in hurried attempts to secure, on paper, a remembrance of some of the impressions made on my mind by the images of beauty and grandeur, which I have seen and contemplated to-day.

"*Dec. 30.*—ROYAL GALLERY.—Expecting to leave Florence in a few days, we knew that we could not examine, or even see all the interesting objects which this rich and splendid gallery contains. We determined to make a selection, and chose to begin with the best. Entering the corridor, we requested to be conducted to the tribune. This is a small hall, of about twenty-one feet diameter, in octagonal form, and covered with a cupola, through which the light is admitted by small windows, and so regulated by means of curtains, that the pictures may be severally seen to the best advantage. The dome of the cupola is ornamented with mother of pearl. The pictures are arranged around the walls below, and around the centre of the room stand the statues. These statues are sufficient, of themselves, to distinguish this room, and give it an interest above all others;—there are five,—all antiques,—and of marble. The first that strikes your eye, on entering the room, is the famous Venus de Medici. It is supposed to be of Grecian sculpture, and the inscription on the pedestal, which



however, is a restoration, but may have been copied from the original, attributes it to Cleomenes. It was discovered in the Villa Hadriana in Tivoli, in the sixteenth century, and brought to Florence, 1689. It was broken into thirteen pieces, which were united together and the parts which were wanting,—the whole of the right arm and part of the left,—restored by a Florentine sculptor. It is a form of most exquisite beauty,—the limbs round, smooth and tapering,—the joints well knit, and well turned,—the flesh full and seeming soft,—the proportions without a fault,—the symmetry perfect,—the attitude easy and graceful and dignified,—the head noble,—and the whole image such as you may gaze upon without dissatisfaction. In comparison with the Venus which I saw yesterday, I think it is less sensual, its form is less voluptuous, its countenance is more noble, and the whole image is more dignified. Nearly opposite to this, stands another statue of similar beauty, and attributed to the same author. It is not disputed that it is of Grecian origin. Both the attitude and form are delightfully easy and graceful. By the side of it is a dancing or drunken fawn, the head of which was restored by Michael Angelo. It is evidently an antique, and is admirable in its kind, the body shrunk, meagre, and dried up,—the limbs strained and the whole form bending, reeling, and in the attitude of uncouth and laughable action. Next to it are two little wrestlers. Their forms are fine, and their limbs and muscles well displayed. They seem not to be in high action, or in the exertion of great strength, or in the exercise of any violent passion, but rather as if amusing themselves in sportive wrestling. And opposite to this, and on the other side of Venus, is a huge, clumsy, powerful form of a slave, represented as whetting a

knife, and in the attitude of listening. It is supposed to have been part of a group representing the fable of Marsyas. It is exceedingly well done. Its square, long form, huge, strong neck, short, neglected hair, wrinkled brow and squalid countenance and hard hands, express the character of a slave, with strong developments of physical nature and strength, and power of labor. It was quite enough for me to contemplate these wonderful specimens of genius and art ; I had no time to study the pictures. Indeed, I have at no time been so dazzled and confounded, as with this imposing display of the beautiful and the grand. It was long before I could collect myself sufficiently to contemplate any one object with steadiness and discrimination. Half distracted and intensely excited, I soon became exhausted, and taking a tour through the corridor, to catch an idea of the arrangement of the building and its treasures, I left the gallery a few moments before it was closed.

“ *Jan. 2, 1837.*—From these Egyptian cabinets we passed to the next opening from the corridor, which, as also the next beyond it, is filled all around its walls with portraits of painters, chiefly done by themselves. We noticed, among others, Michael Angelo, grave and thoughtful, wan and full of intellect. Leonardo da Vinci, very venerable and noble. Andre del Santo, full of nature and sentiment, of sweetness and simplicity. Salvator Rosa, all spirit, activity and energy, erect and elate. Valasquez, full of the Moorish Spaniard. Van Dyke, open, generous and gentle. Guido, mild, sensitive, almost effeminate. Titian, dignified, sensible, manly. C. Dolci, of intense thought and deep feeling. Annibal Caracci, with a look of fixed attention and vigorous, discriminating

thought. Madame le Brun, all vivacity and sprightliness. Rembrandt, calm, sensible, sedate and thoughtful," &c. &c.

TO DEA. AND MRS. C——— J———.

"FLORENCE, January 1, 1837. }  
 "Hotel de l'Europe. }

"MY DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER,

\* \* \* \* \*

"I wrote my last letter, I think to C——, the 5th of December, from Genoa, where, according to Morse's Geography and the American Preceptor, was born Christopher Columbus, the discoverer of America, though it is here generally admitted that he was born in a small village, named Cogoleto, a few miles the other side of Genoa. We stopped at the place, and went into the house in which it is said the great navigator and discoverer first opened his eyes upon a world he was destined to explore. It is a small building by the sea-side, and bears on the outside an inscription and a portrait, designed, I doubt not, to do honor both to him, and to the house. If all the world about him had been as this house is now, it would not seem strange that he should attempt to discover another, at least that he should seek a purer atmosphere on the wide ocean. At any rate, we were very glad to make our retreat as soon as possible into the open air of the streets. In the larger towns, and in the country, too, there are many magnificent dwellings, palaces, villas and country houses. And the people there seem to live in a style of great elegance and abundance, and even of splendor and luxury. But in the villages, the houses, so far as I have seen, especially the hotels or inns, are exceedingly comfortless and unneat.

They are very open too, and cold. As the weather is usually warm, they do not prepare for cold weather, and when it comes, it makes their habitations exceedingly cheerless. We stopped at one place for the night, where it was impossible to get a room with a fire-place in it, and we were obliged, after a long day's ride, and exposure to a chill, damp evening air, to warm ourselves as well as we could around a pan of coals, in a room, where there was not one door that could be shut close.

"According to the custom of the country, all their floors were paved with brick, and being very much worn, broken and dirty, without a rag of a carpet, the appearance was not much unlike that of a well paved pig-sty. Our accommodations, however, in this country, are very good. At this moment, I am sitting in a chair, ornamented with silk and gold, in a magnificent room of an old palace, which has recently been converted into a hotel. The room is, perhaps, twenty feet high or more, and large in proportion; the ceiling arched and painted in fresco, with scenes from Scripture and history, and ornamented with sculpture and gilding. The walls are hung all around with silk tapestry, with a looking-glass eight or ten feet high, and, though the floor is of *brick*, yet with a good carpet and a good fire, it is far from being uncomfortable. I should judge from the appearance, that there is gold enough about the room to purchase half of your farm. The rooms we occupied at Genoa were also very respectable and comfortable. From Genoa we came to Pisa, where is the famous *leaning tower*. Please take your books down and show the tower to G——, and tell him, uncle Samuel has stood upon the top of it, and had a fine view of a wide plain or valley,

covered with vines and mulberry trees and wheat fields,—of a beautiful river flowing through the centre of it,—of the distant city of Leghorn,—of surrounding villages and hills,—of mountains covered with snow,—of the city of Pisa, and of an immense aqueduct four or five miles long, built of huge stone, to bring water into the city from the hills, because people here in those days did not know how to carry water in pipes under ground. They thought, if the water went down so low, it would never rise again! not knowing that it will always rise as high as its source. So they built, at an enormous expense, aqueducts running level all the way, over hills and valleys, sometimes eight or ten miles long. I have stood on one four or five hundred feet high above the valley, arched all the way up.

“From Pisa, after making an excursion to Leghorn, we came to Florence, famous as the seat of genius and the fine arts,—rich in edifices and paintings and sculpture. Our countryman, Mr. Greenough, resides here, and is preparing, as you know, a colossal statue of Washington, to be placed in the rotunda of Congress Hall, at Washington. I have seen the model,—it represents Washington as sitting in his chair, holding a sheathed sword in his left hand, which he seems to be resigning, while the right hand is raised and pointing upward, as if to attribute to God all the success and glory of his achievement. The country about here is very highly cultivated. The population is very dense, and labor is very cheap, and though nobody seems to work hard, there is a great deal of work done. The land is very much improved by ridging, or throwing the ground into ridges with mud, flowing and digging, and by means of draining, and by irrigation or water-

ing, the water being drawn off from the low places, and also brought from high ponds and mountain rivers, in small canals or ditches, all around the sides of hills and dry places that would otherwise be almost barren. The principal growth is of vines and olive trees and wheat and flax. There are some oranges and lemons in sheltered places, but I do not think they thrive well here. It is too near the mountains, and in the winter is too cold.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Your affectionate brother,

“SAMUEL H. STEARNS.”

“P. S. I hope to return sometime in the spring or first of summer, but cannot now tell exactly when.”

NOTE BOOK. “*Jan. 14.*—Rain fell during the night in torrents, and this morning the atmosphere was filled with a dark, deep, dense fog. We had rather a sleepless night. My watch stopped, and the town clocks struck the hour so strangely, that I felt completely lost. I lay waiting, a long time, in anxious expectation of the call of our courier. In Rome and vicinity, I am told, the day is measured by periods of six hours, commencing at a quarter past five o’clock, and here their clocks strike accordingly. Leaving Ramciglione, we found ourselves riding over a barren champaign country, varied only by gentle undulations, covered chiefly with shrubs, and enlivened only by a few herds of horses enclosed in a fenced pasture,—herds of cattle browsing on the plain, and watched by herdsmen,—sheep in their cotes and folds,—some small birds, and a very few lonely cottages. The road, too, was particularly bad,—wet, soft and heavy. We had no

doubt that we had now entered upon the Campagna di Roma, and were soon confirmed in our belief, by the extreme offensiveness of the air near some small streams, and over lowlands crossed by our road. The air seemed to smell of the very essence of malaria. We were obliged to close our carriage windows. We were afterwards told, that the offensiveness of the atmosphere, in this place, was occasioned by some sulphur springs which rise here. The first village which relieved the weariness of this dreary waste, lies on a small, rough eminence, which rises behind into a wild, rough hill. Near this village, which is called Monterosi, we struck upon pavement, which, with a few horrible exceptions, continues the rest of the way to Rome. Near this place the Loretto and Sienna roads form a junction, and we soon found ourselves rolling along the ancient '*via cassia*.'

"We rode directly on, and soon began to ascend a long, barren, desolate-looking hill, from the top of which we descried, in the dim foggy horizon, between a few green pine trees, a form which we readily and confidently recognised as the lantern of the dome of St. Peter's. In a moment we lost sight of it, as we began again to descend the hill. It was the flitting vision of a dream. The country continued, as before, the same 'dreary waste expanding to the skies,' and nothing could be seen to indicate our approach to the 'Eternal City,' save here and there a solitary monument by the way-side, a broken shaft, or column, still standing, though a ruin, in lonely grandeur, as if to testify to the traveller, in each succeeding generation, of an eternity past. On the top of one of these, grew some tall grass or herbs, projecting in graceful bends far beyond the rock which supported it, and waving solemnly in

the heavy breeze, and a raven or hawk or slow-wing, was, at the same time, hovering above. A little further on, and the scene around us had not changed, but in the dim distant horizon, rose towers and turrets and roofs. It was Rome! What a thrill! But the dull, sterile, death-like plain around us forbade all excitement or exhilaration. Monuments and ruins thickened along our path. As we turned a projecting point, on which were piles of ancient walls, at which we were gazing, the dome of St. Peter's stood full and clear before me. My eye eagerly caught the sight and transmitted its emotion to my heart. Again the vision fled, and again it rose and stood full before me; and then bright, silvery waters glistened in the foreground,—the waters of the Tiber. My heart throbbed and palpitated. In a moment, we were crossing this magic stream. We stood over it upon the bridge, Ponte Malle; we were beyond the rolling flood, among the villas of the ever rich and proud and magnificent city. We rode a mile or two and entered the gate of Rome, the porta del popolo, and just within it alighted at the Hotel de l'île Britannique.

*"Sabbath morning, Jan. 15.*—Awoke this morning in Rome, with a full sense and consciousness of being really in Rome. What a deep, full tide of thoughts, recollections and emotions! Nothing but weariness and lassitude, such as I felt too, could repress the flood. I sat down and read of Paul, and thought of Paul and the Cæsars. It was Paul, however, that now filled my mind; every thing around me, every monument, obelisk, column, portico, tower, dome, seemed associated with Paul. After meeting, returning to our hotel, I spent an hour or two in reading of Paul, in meditation and devotion, and then walked out upon the terrace upon the Pincian Hill, directly



back of my lodgings, to indulge my eye and heart in solitary views and musings. Before and around me arose towers and columns and domes,—telling of the magnificence which has been, by the magnificence which still remains among ruins, and survives the wreck of conflagrations and wars and violence and rapine and earthquakes and floods. Above all, rose the majestic dome of St. Peter's, from which deep, full, solemn tones of vesper bells swelled on the ear like sounds from unearthly temples. The whole aspect of Rome is of fading greatness,—yet of greatness still imposing,—and still putting forth anew something of its pristine strength and splendor. It is as an 'archangel fallen, noble though in ruins.'

"O that I were free from the lassitude and depression and weakness and pains and encumbrances of disease, that my free spirit might go forth through this land of enchantment and treasure up its rich remains! One singular impression has seemed to possess me more than all others, ever since my arrival,—an impression of being *at the centre of the world*,—the source of every thing great,—of good and of bad,—the *centre* and the *source*!

"*Jan. 16.*—As preliminary to our appropriate business of sight-seeing, we rode out this morning to take a general view of the great city, to learn its localities, and to catch a glimpse of its magnificent objects of interest.

"We ascended a tower, from which is seen the finest view of the city, both ancient and modern; and with great hilarity I climbed even to the statue upon the summit and gathered a weed growing between its feet. The view was beautiful, grand, sublime, awful, overpowering. Around, lay the hills of the seven-hilled city,—the Viminal,—the Esquiline, on which

stand the baths of Titus and the Santa Maria Maggiore,—the Cœlion, at one extremity of which stands St. John Lateran, and near, at the other extremity, the baths of Antonine,—the Quirinal, on which is the papal palace and Piazza di Monte Cavallo,—the Palatine, directly before us, reverend with ruins and venerable,—awful with mementoes of what was once the city of Romulus. On the right, and by the back of Tiber, the Aventine, one of the most prominent of the hills,—while under our feet we knew was the Capitoline, at the extremity of which is the Tarpeian Rock. Immediately beneath our eyes lay the Forum, like a god in ruins,—three columns of the temple of Jupiter Tonans,—the eight Ionic columns and entablature and part of the pediment of the portico of the temple of Fortune,—according to Mrs. Stark, and of Concord, according to others,—the monumental column of Phocas,—the arch of Septimius Severus,—three beautiful, fluted Corinthian columns of Pentelic marble, which mark the site, and once composed a part, of the Comitia, near which was the Rostra, and the Curia,—the broken walls and the arches of the temple of Peace,—the arch of Titus,—the arch of Constantine,—the Via Sacra,—and, terminating this view, the magnificent, the sublime, the terribly awful Coliseum,—the giant of cruelty and death,—a giant still, though in ruins. Turning from this view, and descending the tower, we walked to the extremity of the Tarpeian Rock, gathered some plants which overhung the precipice,—and then leaving these scenes of awe-striking, overpowering sublimity, we hastened away to scenes of more recent date, and more dazzling splendor. We crossed the Tiber on the Ponte Elia, passed the towers of San Angelo, and stood within the Piazza di San Pietro. We were

before the entrance of the most magnificent structure in the world,—we ascended its steps, and entered within the door of St. Peter's. All the dreams of childhood and youth, respecting this wonder and glory of the world, were realized in a moment. We actually stood between the columns and beneath the dome of the church of St. Peter's,—dazzled,—awed,—confounded. I will not now attempt a description or even a record of impressions. As we came out, we passed the entrance of the Vatican, guarded by Swiss soldiers, in their highland dress, and armed with the spear and lance. We again entered our carriage and rode away. The first consciousness of personal existence was of the throbbing pain of an aching head. We returned immediately to our hotel. I threw myself on my bed, exhausted, and aching in every limb, and strove in vain for composure and rest till the hour of dinner; since which I have only made a feeble attempt to fasten the visions of the day, and, by this sketching scrawl, secure a clue for the recollections of the scenes which have passed before me, and the emotions which have swelled my breast, and thrilled my nerves, and strained my heart.

“*Jan. 18.*—Commemoration of the Inauguration of St. Peter,—of the day when the apostle was first installed pope,—and of the day when St. Peter's chair was first placed in St. Peter's church. We took our breakfast half an hour earlier than usual, in order to be in season to secure a favorable standing-place (a seat being out of the question for gentlemen), to witness the ceremonies. \* \* \* \* \*

“We arrived at the church half an hour before the time for the ceremony to commence, and took a stand with other privileged gentlemen, nearly in front of the ladies, and close by

the great altar. Officers and soldiers and priests and friars and students and visitors and people were just collecting, and were seen flitting along the vast nave, entering from the chapels, and disappearing behind the columns, in every direction, with the various aspect of every rank, and every variety of costume. A long range of Swiss guards, clad in highland dress, of purple, yellow and red, striped, and fantastically composed, armed with lances, and wearing helmets, lined the nave of the church, below the altar; while companies of Romish cavalry were stationed on either side of the choir, directly in front of distinguished visitors, to guard the platform from intrusion. Presently a burst of music announced the approach of his holiness. Clad in pontifical robes, with tiara set with rich gems and precious stones, upon his head, and preceded by lay cardinals, or cardinal deacons, as I supposed them to be, and by the college of cardinals, he was borne in a chair of state, by twelve men, dressed in plain, coarse, unornamented scarlet, attended by two men, who held aloft, on either side, a broad plume or flat canopy, resembling a peacock's tail, and followed by a retinue of priests, deacons, officers, servants, &c., &c. With eye closed, and downcast countenance, and hands folded or clasped upon his breast, save when parted for an instant in seeming act of devotion, he moved or was borne with the procession, amid music or smoke and incense, slowly up the nave, to a position in the choir just behind the high altar, when he was set down, and rising from his chair, his train held by six attendants, and accompanied by others, moved forward a few steps, and kneeled before a temporary altar, placed there for the occasion. Meantime, the chair was removed and placed just behind me, on his left, before a temporary stage, enclosed,

and resembling a cage, filled with singers. The moment the chair was rested before them, and the staves withdrawn from the rings, the singers commenced their music, and the pope proceeded with his silent devotions. Then rising, he was conducted to the chair or throne, raised on a platform, before a screen, in the centre of the choir, prepared for the occasion. The cardinals, clothed in scarlet robes, with long trains carried by attendants, and with white fur capes upon their shoulders, arranged themselves in seats on the right and left, their attendants, clothed in purple and holding in their hands the cardinals' caps, standing before them, or sitting upon the steps, at their feet. A company of ecclesiastics, in various costumes, and apparently of diverse ranks, also seated themselves on the steps or footstool before the platform, on which was placed the throne of the pope. An ecclesiastic, robed like a bishop, with a mitre upon his head, sat by a small temporary altar, placed just by one of the pillars which support the bronze canopy of the great altar. He was also attended by three others, in the richest and fullest dress of officiating priests. The lay cardinals, as I have called them, ranged themselves on the steps around the great altar. The bishops, for so I designate the mitred priests, chanted a portion, which was followed by the music of the singers. The pope's tiara had been exchanged for his mitre, apparently of gold thread, finely woven; and near him sat the servants of his household, and two or three cardinals, who, from time to time, removed and replaced his mitre, opened and spread his cloak, or wrapped it closely about him, and adjusted his robes, seemingly at pleasure. The cardinals now successively advanced, with trailing robes, followed by their attendants, and, making a circle half round the

choir, bowed and bent the knee, and bent the knee and bowed, and marched up to the platform, kneeled upon its steps, bowed and advanced, and kissed the pope's finger, received his blessing, bowed and kneeled, and marched, in stately and solemn step, back to their seats again. The bishops again chanted, and the singers sung, and one of the officiating and robed priests took a book, and with much bowing and many genuflexions, marched boldly up to the pope, and knelt and bowed, and kissed his great toe, which was carefully thrown open by his attendants, who removed the cloak and adjusted the robes, and then held before his holiness the book, from which the pope chanted a portion, in a fine, full voice, that indicated more energy than any act of his during the day. This, or a similar ceremony, was repeated several times, and by each of the other glittering functionaries, on whom the services of the altar seemed chiefly to depend, and each of whom was honored in turn, with the special privilege of kissing the pope's toe. I could not discover that this most honorable member was bared, or exposed naked, for the purpose, but thought I saw that the foot was clothed in a shoe, of deep, rich purple.

"At length, came forth the orator. He was a young man, apparently thirty, or thirty-five, modestly clad in black, with a square cap upon his head. Preceded by his appropriate attendant, he walked slowly up, bowed and knelt, and kissed the reverend toe, and, receiving a blessing from the holy father, turned aside to a temporary pulpit, and, aided by a prompter, delivered, with tolerable fluency and grace, a short address to the pope, during which there was a pause made, and some trivial ceremony. After which came the ceremony of

perfuming, or offering incense to the pope. The censer was then full and warm, and the fragrant smoke of it seemed almost overpowering to the aged father, as his mitre was laid aside, and his cloak thrown open to receive it, and it ascended in full volumes and thick clouds above his head. The censer was held before him by a cardinal, and next, by another officer. The ceremony was repeated upon each of the cardinals, who arose and received the incense in turn, till the smoke and perfume were fairly exhausted, and those who were last in order to be thus honored, were obliged to content their dignity, by simply seeing the cold and empty censer waved ceremoniously before them.

“Other ceremonies, less noticeable, were soon despatched. The pope’s altar was again set, and with his attendants and retinue, he left his throne, advanced to the altar, kneeled and bowed, and read with silently moving lips, a chant or prayer, or benediction, during which, every good Catholic, even the soldiers and guards, stepped one step backward, and kneeled, as in solemn devotion. The chair of state was then brought forward, and replaced just behind the pope, who slowly arose, turned and seated himself in it, receiving again the sparkling, gem-studded tiara in exchange for his mitre, and, lifted up upon the shoulders of those who were privileged to carry him, and preceded by his cardinals, was borne slowly and solemnly along the great nave to the door of the Vatican, when he was again set down, and rising upon his feet, walked quickly away, seeming to rejoice in his escape from the burden and restraint of being used as a show in this solemn farce. Soldiers, guards, cardinals, priests, visitors, &c., &c., then dispersed, and the pomp and parade and ceremony were

ended. Never was I more disgusted with the emptiness of pageantry, or more indignant at wilful folly and imposition ; and never did I more pity the subject of pageantry, than this poor old man, who is used as a pope, to flatter the pride of dignitaries, who receive all his honor, reflected without his burdens, and to pamper themselves, by imposing, through him, upon the credulity and fears of the populace. I stood frequently very near him, and had a full, distinct view of his features and expression. He is a tall man, rather large, with large, full face, double chin, dark complexion, prominent features, and gray hair. His look is sleepy and demure,—without energy, and without any expression of thought, feeling or intelligence. During the procession, he kept his eyes closed, but, once or twice, at some sudden turn, or momentary rustle, he opened them, and looked around, with an expression of solicitude, and I thought with indications of greater energy than he had been wont to exhibit. The priests and ecclesiastics, with all their habituated and assumed appearance of sanctity, frequently yawned, whispered and smiled, and seemed to feel any thing but a personal and honest interest in the spirit of the ceremony. It was for the benefit of the people. I was struck, too, on this occasion of honor to St. Peter, with the entire neglect, on the part of the functionaries, towards this patriarch apostle. There he sat, a bronze statue, in his chair, lighted by two ordinary candles, his toes almost worn off by the daily kissing of the populace and his habitual votaries ; but no one turned aside from the procession to do him homage, or pay respect to his memory. The pope himself passed and repassed him, without even a passing salutation.

“ *Rome, Jan. 23, 1837.*—Near the southern end of the



ancient Forum, and nearly opposite the Basilica of Constantine, or temple of Peace, stands the arch of Titus. It was built by the senate and people of Rome, in honor of his conquest of Jerusalem. It consists of a single, large arch and an attic story, and was composed of Pentelic marble. Each front was originally embellished with four fluted composite columns, only two of which, on the south side, remain entire, and there is a part of one of the original columns remaining on the opposite side. These columns or portions of columns, with the entire interior, and part of the attic story, are all that now appears of the original structure; the marble casings and columns of the rest of the building having been despoiled, probably for the erection of other edifices, and restored with materials and in a style, quite distinct and modern. The original form and dimensions, however, are preserved, and enough remains to indicate that it was one of the most beautiful buildings of its kind. On the attic fronting the amphitheatre, is the inscription; '*Senatus—Populusque. Romanus—Divo. Tito. Divi, Vespasiani. F.—Vespasiano Augusto.*' On the frieze is the triumphal procession of Titus. Under the arch, on one side, is Titus in his triumphal car, and on the other are the spoils of the temple of Jerusalem. On the roof of the inside of the arch is the deification of Titus. It was under this arch that the Roman conqueror rode in triumph, preceded by the noble captive sons of Judah, and the sacred treasures of the Holy of Holies, when, in fulfilment of prophecy, he had achieved a victory, which put an end to the Mosaic dispensation, terminated the sacred service of the sacred temple, and reduced the favored and peculiar people to abject and servile

bondage,—to long centuries of dispersion, poverty and degradation.

“A few steps from this spot (the church of San Giorgio), flowing under a small path, over which small brick arches are thrown, is a rill of limpid water, supposed, by tradition, to be the source of the Juturna, and of the lake of the same name, in which Castor and Pollux, watered their horses after the battle of Lacus Regillus. This little rill of pure water discharges itself into the Cloica Madinio, giving action to a paper-mill in its course. We followed the path a few steps, and came to the entrance of the great arch of the famous Cloica Madinio, constructed for the double purpose of draining this marshy spot, and as a general conductor for the common sewers of the ancient city. It is built of immense stones, said to have been hewn out upon the Tarpeian Rock, laid up without cement, and large enough for a car with a load of hay to pass under it. It may sometimes be entered by a boat, but was not full, though the water was flowing. Numerous small common sewers are connected with it and flow into the Tiber. This stupendous subterranean corridor, eighteen Roman architectural palmi in height and breadth, was constructed by Tarquinius Priscus, and extended, by means of other smaller Cloacæ, by Tarquinius Superbus. We had no reason to doubt its antiquity, for every sense, competent to witness, testified that it is exceeding *ancient*. \* \* \* \* \*

“*Jan. 25.*—At half-past two o’clock we rode out, and choosing to compensate the shortness of our visit by the quality and character of the object visited, we gave direction to drive to the Pantheon. It was with a thrill of awe, that I found myself in

the Piazza, before the noble columns of the temple, which has so often charmed my youthful imagination, and filled my soul with admiration. \* \* \* \*

“It is so surrounded and built upon, by rude, unsightly buildings, that the exterior can scarcely be seen, and the marble, with which it was encased, has been removed, leaving only unsightly brick walls. The modern towers, or turrets, by Bernini, also obstruct the view of the dome, and injure the symmetry of the structure. But the portico still presents a noble aspect,—fair and grand, simple, chaste, beautiful, it possesses the mind and fills it with pure and satisfying sublimity. Here was realized, in a moment, the visions of childhood and schoolboy imaginations. I was actually before and in view of the Pantheon, whose grand columns and classic proportions, constructed in the brightest days of the Augustan age, have stood and spread themselves, for almost two thousand years, and they now stand and display their unrivalled beauties. The portico is composed of sixteen columns and four pilasters, supporting an entablature, pediment and roof. Eight of the columns form the front line, and the other eight are arranged in double rows behind them, and the pilasters rest against the wall. The columns are Corinthian, with shafts of Egyptian granite, forty-two feet high, five in circumference, and with bases and capitals of marble. The portico is one hundred and ten feet long in front, and forty-four feet deep. The columns and pilasters within, support an entablature and small arches, on which rests the roof. The ceiling of the roof is now naked. It was formerly covered with gilt bronze, and it is believed that Urban VIII took it away and formed, from a

part of it, the twisted columns which support the canopy of the great altar in St. Peter's church.

“The marks of the nails upon the pediments, indicate that this was covered formerly with bassi relievi, probably of bronze. The doors of the entrance are bronze, but they are not, it is said, the original doors, which were highly ornamented with bass-reliefs, and were taken away and lost in the Sicilian sea. The interior of the rotunda has also been stripped of the bronze which covered and adorned its roof, and has suffered several other alterations. But it is still noble, and fills you with *one* idea of simple, severe grandeur. The floor, which is of porphyry, giallo, and various kinds of marble, has been raised seven or eight feet, and a corresponding attic has been raised above the columns. Recesses have also been cut in the walls, to form side chapels, and between these chapels, seven in number, are altars placed alternately. The diameter of the rotunda is one hundred and fifty feet, and the thickness of the walls twenty. The height, to the top of the dome, was originally the same as the diameter, and the circular opening in the dome, which alone admits and diffuses the light, is twenty-eight feet. The walls are adorned all around with magnificent Corinthian columns of giallo antico, and the columns, which adorn the side chapels, are, I think, of the same material. Those of the altars, also, are of giallo, porphyry, oriental granite and various marbles. The walls below the entablature are still chiefly ornamented with various and beautiful marbles. The ruthless hand of barbarian ignorance and avarice has made sad despoliations, yet after all, one may easily form an idea of its primitive glory, and even as it is, I

know of no structure, that inspires one with such complete unity and grandeur of emotion.

"*Jan. 27. The Museo Capitolino.*— \* \* \* \*

The apartment of the Faun has several pleasant specimens of sculpture, yet derives its chief interest from a statue of a Faun, in rosso antico, which stands in the centre of the room, and was found in the villa of Adrian. But the object which abstracts and absorbs the interest of all the rest, is in the 'apartment of the Gladiator,' which also contains many excellent pieces of sculpture, but all tame and unworthy of notice in comparison with the statue of the dying hero, who 'consents to death, yet conquers agony.' This statue was found in the gardens of Sallust, and is considered, by many, as a copy of the masterpiece in bronze, by Ctesilochus, representing a wounded man in the agonies of death. The right is a restoration by Michael Angelo. But whether a copy or an original, it exhibits the power of the chisel, not surpassed by any thing I have seen. The statue reclines on the right hand, the left resting on the right knee, the leg being drawn up under him. The head is drooping, but every limb and muscle is composed and firm, nerved to the highest degree of endurance, yet scarcely if at all distorted, and apparently just ready to relax and yield, from mere exhaustion. The form is noble and well developed, and the outlines are fully and grandly drawn. The expression is one of magnanimity and endurance, almost superhuman. O, how superior to any thing which modern genius and skill have produced to represent suffering deity in the flesh!

"*Feb. 9. Ascent to the ball of St. Peter's.*—After waiting until one o'clock for the sacristan to take his dinner, we were

conducted up a long, circular ascent, like a mule path, of one hundred and forty-two low, broad, winding steps, to the top or roof of the Basilica. Here was presented to our view, the appearance of a huge mass or pile of buildings, like a small city, with open workshops, workmen, mules, &c., arranged around its walls and balustrades. It would be difficult to separate the parts, even in imagination, or form any distinct idea of their separate use and relations, much less of their combination and symmetry as a whole. Such is the aspect of St. Peter's, upon its roof. I tried in vain to analyse its structure. I would have walked around it, but iron gates, roofs, towers, and other obstacles prevented me. The view of the surrounding country and of the city is grand, but did not equal my expectations. It will bear no comparison to the unrivalled view from St. Paul's. The country around Rome is undulating in its surface, and presents rather a pleasant outline to the eye. But the soil looks light, sandy, barren, uncultivated, and the whole region is desolate. The hills, however, and mountains, which bound the view on one side, and the sea on the other, contribute to give it a picturesque and animating appearance. The gardens of the Vatican, and numerous fountains near the Basilica, are beautiful. The hills and ruins and deserted plains of ancient Rome may also be seen with tolerable distinctness; but, on the whole, the view is not so good as from the tower of the Senate house, or Capitoline hill. We ascended the noble dome, and had a grand view of its interior, and of the church below, from each of the two galleries that surround it. We had here an opportunity of a nearer and more distinct view of the ingenious and beautiful Mosaics that adorn its vault. We continued to ascend between the two walls or roofs of the dome, where we could

observe its ingenious and powerful architectural form, till we reached even the ball under the cross, nearly four hundred and fifty feet from the ground. I stood upright within the ball, and had a space of a foot or more above my head. The ball is perfectly safe, but is fractured and pervious to the light in many places. It has also been mended and patched, till it resembles an old worn-out brass kettle. The air, from the condensed rays of the sun on the outer surface, was very hot, and as we could see nothing but through the crevices, we soon hastened down. Our sacristan, or cicerone, was disposed to hurry us along, and the party were weary, so that I felt obliged to turn abruptly from the view and reflections which I would fain have indulged, upon the roof of the sublimest structure in the world.

"*Feb.* 10.—Afternoon, I walked across the Piazza, to look at some modern paintings, which are now exhibited, by living artists in Rome. The authors are not all of Roman origin, but from all parts of the continent. There are perhaps fifty or sixty paintings, of landscapes, portraits, fancy pictures, &c. But the contrast between them and the works of the ancients is astonishing, ludicrous, disgusting. A white, glaring, chalky appearance characterizes them all,—while many of them are most miserable daubs, without meaning, design, drawing or coloring. I am sure most of them would be considered a disgrace to any pretended artist in our own country. I never saw such exhibited there, and am confident that such would not be publicly exposed. For instance, a Magdalen, by a Genevese artist,—a portrait, by the same,—a peasant girl, by another,—all purple and chalk, insipidity and smirk. One, the Improvisator, is generally approved, and by some admired ;

I think not, however, by men of taste and cultivation. The picture of a female, by a Prussian artist, pleases me best. It has meaning and sentiment and nature. The drawing is pretty correct, and the coloring soft, delicate and harmonious. On the whole, this exhibition is very instructive; I would not have failed of seeing it.

"Feb. 11.—For a considerable time past, I have found myself becoming disordered and debilitated, and Providence seems to lay a restraining hand upon me. Perhaps I need only a few days of quiet and repose, to recover my equilibrium and now exhausted energies. In any case, I cannot contend with events,—I may not contend with God.

‘He is his own interpreter,  
And he will make it plain.’

"It is sweet, as days and weeks seem rapidly whirling away, to welcome again the return of Saturday night. May I now enjoy a day of repose, both for the body and for the soul!

‘Welcome sweet day of heavenly rest.’

Just before dinner, walked a short distance down the broso, and afterwards introduced Saturday evening with reading a psalm and offering our devotions.

"Feb. 15. *Visit to the church of S. Pietro.*— \* \* \*  
The object which gives special interest to this church is the figure of Moses, in a monument to Julius II, designed by Michael Angelo, who died soon after he had completed the statue of Moses, and executed in the remaining parts by Montelupo. The statue is in a sitting posture, in an attitude of easy repose, his hands gathering his drapery around him,



and his right arm leaning on the two tables of stone, which rest on his knee. His left foot and leg is withdrawn and reposingly gathered back under him. His head and chest are erect, elate, and his countenance open, elevated and animated. The design is exceedingly good. The muscles, nerves and veins are developed with wonderful power. A long, flowing, clustered beard hangs down upon the breast. The forehead, though not remarkably high or broad, is prominent and slightly wrinkled. The eye-brows are full and slightly knit. The features are all prominent, and the general expression of the countenance is elevated, calm, vigorous thoughtfulness. I had heard much of this statue, heard it commended, condemned, and coldly approved. But my best and highest conceptions of it were more than fulfilled. It is personification of power and majesty. The expression is simple,—the idea is one,—it is unrivalled *greatness*. My whole soul was filled, elevated, and expanded with the view, and I gazed upon it, with fixed and silent and almost unconscious admiration,—scarcely noticing any thing else, and scarcely susceptible of any impression from any other object, till my companions had completed their round of observations, and were ready to go. There is a black spot on the right knee, where it is said Michael Angelo, when he had completed the work, delighted with his own embodied conception, and admiring the force of its expression, struck it, exclaiming, ‘why don’t you speak?’ I have never before been fully able to appreciate the genius of Michael Angelo. Here it is, in breathing marble, powerful, majestic beyond description. This statue reaches the height of awful sublimity.

TO REV. AND MRS. F—— J——.

"ROME, Jan. 28, 1837.

**"MY DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER,**

"I have now been in Rome nearly a fortnight ; and though I have not yet become familiar with all the localities, and have yet seen but comparatively few of the innumerable interesting objects, of the seven-hilled city, I have had an opportunity to catch, at least, a glimpse of the distinguishing features, and to take a general view of the ruined form of what was once the proud mistress of the world. I have stood upon the Capitoline hill, and from the tower of the Senate-house, have looked down upon the Forum below, and around upon the Viminal, the Esquiline, the Cœlion, the Quirinal, the Palatine, and the Aventine Hills, upon the Tiber, and, upon the Tarpeian Rock. I have walked among the ruins of the Coliseum, and viewed the few still standing, time-worn, lonely columns of the Comitium, of the temples of Jupiter Tonans, and Concordia, and lingered among the fallen capitals and broken pillars of undistinguished temples, palaces, dwellings and public edifices, once the scene of life and splendor. I have gazed upon the triumphal arches of Titus and Constantine and Septimius, upon the monumental columns of Trajan and Aurelius and Phocas ; have stood before the classic, beautiful, grand portico, and under the noble dome of the Pantheon, which has survived the wreck of all around it, and stood almost uninjured in its primitive glory, for almost two thousand years ; and have lifted up my eyes upon the lofty arches and vaults, and far more lofty dome of St. Peter's, hanging in awful sublimity over my head. I have viewed the

collections, and glanced my eye upon the seemingly countless remains of ancient art, which now adorn the Vatican and the Museum, and the Palazzo di Conservatori. I have seen, too, the college of Propaganda, the cardinals and the pope.

“But from all the objects and the scenes around me, I gladly turn away, to converse an hour with those whom I love in my dear, dear, far away native land. I remember them daily, and often think of them individually, and anticipate the pleasure and the gratitude we shall feel, if I may greet them again, all still living, still prosperous, still useful, still in health, in their own warm homes. How do you all do at M———? Methinks I see you, in your new, snug, comfortable house, all bustling, good-natured and busy, or quietly seated around your bright fire-side, talking over the affairs of the day, framing plans, and making the arrangements of the family, or perhaps kindly wondering what has become of him, who is over the seas, as well as

‘Over the hills and far away.’

I see you all now, a thriving, happy group, and I almost hear you speak. Do speak out, write to me, and tell me how it goes with you. I suppose that Samuel is fast growing into a man, and, I hope, a good minister. Tell him he must be a good boy, and learn to read and write, and get his Latin grammar, and read through his Virgil and Horace and Cicero, and then after he has gone through college, he must come away over here, and see where these great men lived, where Virgil and Horace sung, and Cicero pleaded, and where senates and states were swayed by the voice of a single man.

Take down your map, and show him and A—— J—— and C—— where I am, and let Pa tell them some stories about Rome, and tell them not to forget their uncle.

“I am very anxious to hear of mother and her affairs. I hear you have had hard times in America, this season,—an early frost, small crops, and every thing dear. But I trust that the bounties of a kind Providence have not been wanting to make you all very comfortable. You must tell me about the church affairs at Bedford, and about your own church affairs. Your success in the ministry has been very pleasing, and, I doubt not, you feel more and more, as I do, that there is no higher or nobler employment. I should have rejoiced, if I had had health, to spend my life in this service. But Providence has been leading me, and is still leading me, in a way that I marked not out for myself. What is yet before me, or what his designs concerning me may be, I know not,—but certainly, whatever is ordered by him will be wise and good :

‘God is his own interpreter,  
And he will make it plain.’

“My health, though not confirmed, and not wholly relieved from disease, is, I think, improved, and I trust will still be improving. I hope to be able to return in the spring or summer, in a condition to be useful in some degree, and in some humble sphere. But the future we will leave to him whose province it is to direct and control it.

“I am sorry that I let my letter run into such a mere scribble. I intended to have given you some account of interesting scenes here, but I find I have left myself no room. Well,

then, let them go, until I can tell you about them, *viva voce*, in your own parlor. \* \* \* \* Love to all, and many blessings upon you and yours.

"Your affectionate brother,

"SAMUEL H. STEARNS."

"P. S. The fields all around us are green, and the birds sing merrily every morning, but snow is distinctly seen on the distant hills, and the air is chilly and damp. It rains almost every day, and colds are very prevalent. I have had such a cold as almost to unfit me for going out for several days. I suppose the snow-banks lie all around your house, but with a good snug New England fire, you are, perhaps, as comfortable as we."

"ROME, Feb., 1837.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

\* \* \* \* \*

"We have been in Rome now a little more than four weeks, and notwithstanding the depression and disability produced by my cold, I have had opportunity to see a considerable part of the seven-hilled city. Yet I could give you no account of it, beyond a meagre catalogue of the different objects of interest, which have attracted my attention. If I were in your warm study, or up in that little chamber you have built for me, and towards which I often cast a longing look, I might take out the map, and spread before you the lines of the eternal city, and walk with you from hill to hill, and from ruin to ruin, and talk in unrestrained terms of all that is interesting in classic or religious associations. I think I would first take you to the top of the tower of the present Senate-house on Capitoline hill,

and near the site of the ancient citadel, and bid you look down on 'yon fields below, where a thousand years of silenced factions sleep.' We would then extend our view to the Quirinal, Palatine and the Aventine hills, and to the Tarpeian rock; and then, enlarging our circle, we would trace the Viminal, the Esquiline and the Cœlion hills,—the limits of ancient Rome; and then, still expanding our view, we would follow up and down the winding course of the yellow Tiber, we would point out Mons Sacer, and gaze away into the distance, upon Mons Soracte, the Alban mount, and the frosty Apennines. We might then return, and, descending from the Capitol, lounge along the Forum, at its base,—the Forum,—'where still the eloquent air burns, breathes with Cicero.' Here I would show you the coarse, brick walls, which mark the site of the ancient Senate-house, and the three beautiful standing columns of the Comitium, and the six columns with almost the entire *façade* of the temple of Jupiter Tonans; and then we would stroll away, over heaps of ruins, to half-fallen walls of the matchless, the sublime, the awful Coliseum; and, returning, we would march together in triumph, as I have often triumphantly rode, under the arch of Titus, the arch of Septimius, and the arch of Constantine. These objects have all now become very familiar to me, and if your curiosity inquires where else I have been, and what else I have seen, I might, perhaps, gratify it by telling you I have strolled among the ruined palaces of Palatine, which once embraced the entire city of Romulus, and afterwards was too narrow for a single Cæsar. I have been down into the baths of Titus and Caracalla and Livia, and up into the mausoleum of Augustus,—have seen the tomb of Scipio, and wandered around the sepulchral monument of

Cecilia Metella, and the pyramid of Caius Cestus,—have seen the site of the house of Mæcenas, and of Horace and Virgil,—have strolled through the gardens of Sallust,—have stood in the temples of Vesta and Minerva, and beneath the broad dome of the beautiful Pantheon. I have been up into the ball of St. Peter's, and gazed around upon the broad plains of the Romana Campagna, and upon the Mare Mediteraneum,—have been down into the cell where Jugurtha was starved to death, and Peter was imprisoned,—have stood upon the spot where Paul is said to be buried, and visited the sequestered valley in which he was beheaded,—have seen the very stone (don't you doubt it!) upon which his head was stricken off, and drank water from one of the three fountains which miraculously gushed forth at each bound of the decapitated head!—more marvellous still, I have seen the pillar on which the cock crew when Peter denied his master! the *very table*, yes, certainly, the very table on which the Lord's Supper was instituted, and the flight of steps over which our Saviour was dragged into the presence of Pilate, and upon which scores of votaries are seen climbing upon their knees every day. I have seen, too, multitudes of the priests of 'Babylon,' the cardinals and the pope; have seen the latter kiss his finger, and the former his great *toe*! I would like also to tell you of the glorious treasures of art and genius I have seen,—the works of Raphael and Michael Angelo, and the sculpture of the ancients,—the Gladiator, whose 'manly brow consents to death, yet conquers agony,'—the Laocoon, 'a father's love, a mortal's agony,'—and the Apollo, 'god of light and love and poesy,'—but I can only touch your imagination, and refer you to your own recollections."

## CHAPTER VIII.

## SICKNESS AND DEATH.

MR. STEARNS took a severe cold while at Florence, in the early part of the winter. This was, doubtless, aggravated by over-exertion and exposure in the exciting employment of "sight-seeing," and by those strong emotions which the scenes and objects he daily witnessed must have produced. But the weather, while he was at Florence, was exceedingly trying to his frail constitution. The atmosphere was cold, damp and chilling, such as penetrates and dispirits and disorders an invalid. On the first of January he writes: "Even now, though roses and other flowers are blooming in the gardens, the mountains and hills all round are white with snow and the air feels exceedingly chill. It is not like a New England winter, but it is almost as uncomfortable, with frequent rain, hail, sleet and even snow, though it melts almost as soon as it falls." The thermometer, on the third of January, at Florence, was four degrees below zero, and ranged during that week, every morning, from one to four below.

Jan. 4, Mr. Stearns writes in his Note Book: "The weather lowery, the air chill and frosty and penetrating, giving rise to a conversation upon the climate of Italy, in which I remarked, that I would not advise a friend with delicate lungs to pass a winter in Italy for the sake of a bland atmosphere."

Feb. 16, he writes from Rome, in a letter to his friends in America: "The air of Italy is not always that bland, conge-



nial, balmy breath, of which poets sing and rhapsodists exclaim. In the winter, it is often damp, chill and piercing. I do not know, that I ever felt a harsher, more penetrating, subduing wind, even on the coast of New England, in the month of April or May, than that which blew upon us most of our time, in Florence, from the snow-clad hills which surround that city. And, since we came to Rome, though it is all verdure around us, we are not beyond the sight of hoary hills and snow-capped mountains,—gelidæ montes,—and the atmosphere, though much milder and softer than at Florence, is exceedingly chill and moist, just such as opens the whole frame and exposes one to the influence of weather. Colds have been very prevalent here, especially among strangers, and I have suffered my share. A severe cold, bringing with it cough, and all the aggravated symptoms of my disease, has nearly subdued me. It has wholly unfitted me for exertion, and prevents me from giving utterance to my feelings, in writing to friends. Yet, with the exception of a few days, it has not prevented me from going abroad daily, and I am now beginning to hope that the worst is over. As it is, I have much occasion for confidence in a Father's providence and protection. But you see, that in flying across the ocean, or running down into Italy from the cold clime of the North, one does not necessarily escape the thousand ills that flesh is heir to."

"ROME, March 14, 1837.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"The mail of last Thursday brought me, from you, a very kind, welcome and cheering letter, and with it many inter-

esting, thrilling, touching recollections of boyhood and early youth. I seemed to live those scenes over again, with all their exciting interests concentrated into one short hour.

"I was much gratified with the pleasing representations you gave me of home and its delightful scenes. Surely, Providence has taken a very kind and faithful care of the family, during my absence. Your account of their health and happiness filled my heart with gratitude and joy. My prayers were all answered, my desires all gratified.

"I was delighted, also, with your report of the ordination at Bedford. The little flock has again a shepherd. The good people, contrary to the fears of many friends, and the confident, boasting predictions of their enemies, have procured and settled an able, amiable, faithful pastor,—and one with whom we may take sweet counsel, as a Christian, a scholar, a gentleman and a minister. In all this I rejoice, yea, and I will rejoice.

"And now, my brother, I wish I could give you as pleasing and cheering account of myself,—of my health and prospects. I know my friends are waiting, with much solicitude for my return, and indulging high hopes of my health and future usefulness. They are hoping to see me return to them soon, free from the debility and depression of disease,— hale, robust and prepared both to do and to endure, in the active business of life, —to be a blessing to them, to the church and to the world. I have cherished such hopes, nay, indulged such expectations. You know I have all along been sustained by a *sentiment*, that I should ultimately recover, and be of service in the church. That *sentiment* does not wholly desert me. But my *judgment* is decidedly against it. When I wrote last, I had been suffering some time the effects of a severe cold, induced by a damp,

chill atmosphere, and perhaps aggravated by exposure and over-exertion. I hoped, however, that I should soon revive. But in this I have been disappointed. My cold has abated,—but some of the symptoms of my disease have returned upon me, as an armed giant,—with depressing and overwhelming power. I have scarcely been able to do any thing, but simply endure, since I wrote you last. I am now, however, a little better, and it is *possible* that nature may rise with invigorated strength. Ought I to expect so much? Is it not more probable, that the disease will still retain its dominion over me? Must we not now, having tried every probable means of recovery, make up our minds to yield to what seemed to be public sentiment, before I left my native shores, and which, perhaps, we ought to have regarded more, that Providence requires me to sit calmly down and be content to ‘preach by example,’—by patient endurance? I write not thus to dishearten my friends,—I am sorry to sadden them,—but merely, that we may be prepared for such an issue. Frankness, affection, mutual interest and confidence seem to require it.”

“NAPLES, April 7, 1837.

“MY DEAR SISTER,

“The climate in Naples I find more congenial than in Florence or Rome. And I hope I shall soon regain so much strength and freedom from pain and distress, that I shall be able to pursue my journey homeward with considerable comfort.

“Yesterday, I had the pleasure of receiving a good long letter from Mr. L——. I read it with emotions of deep and thrilling interest, and not without a tear. I rejoice that he has

become the settled, responsible and authorized pastor of the little flock of Christ in which I was nurtured, and with which so many of my most loved friends are still gathered. Very dear to me is the little church of my native village, with all that is connected with that church. And I trust that brother L—— will long be blessed, and a blessing, in his sacred relation to it. I would almost say to him, in language which seems too holy, ‘*Lovest thou me? Feed my sheep; feed my lambs.*’ I cannot but feel, that in this event God has kindly answered our prayers; the prayers both of the living and the dead. The same letter cast a shadow over me, by the saddening news of the death of our aged and venerable uncle L——. Indeed, the news was not altogether unexpected. I could scarcely hope that he would survive another winter; and after I concluded to remain abroad till spring, I did not much expect to see him again, though I thought of him daily, and made him a subject of my daily prayers. But how much soever the event was anticipated, and how much soever we might be prepared for it, still, when the aged, decayed tree which we have been accustomed to look upon from childhood, and around which have gathered some of our fondest feelings and recollections, has actually fallen, and we hear the crash and look up, there seems to be a void in the garden of friendship and affection, that looks dreary and desolate,—and we cannot but feel sad. We remember that tree when it was verdant and fresh, and we played under its branches and regaled ourselves with the rich fruit it dropped into our lap, or scattered plentifully around us. But decay has passed upon the tree, and we who now mourn its fall will soon decay also.

“Please make my apology to —— and others, for not

writing more frequently. At present, I am scarcely able to endure the fatigues and irregularities to which we are daily and necessarily exposed. I *do* but very little, yet every day I cripple and am ready to fall.

"Naples is a very interesting place and more pleasing to me than any I have seen in Italy. It is quite peculiar; if I were well I should enjoy it much."

From this time, Mr. Stearns's health seems rather to have declined than improved. On his return to Paris, June 5, he writes:—"After a long and painful and anxious, though in many respects pleasant, journey from Naples, by Leghorn (steam-boat), by Florence, Bologne, Venice, Milan, Turin and Geneva, I arrived safely in Paris, on Friday, P. M., and secured lodgings just in season to get my letters.

"I rejoice in the account they give of home. *All is well.* A kind Providence takes care of you all, according to my daily prayers. *So he does of me*, but in a different way. My disease has come back upon me, with a giant grasp, and my strength cripples under its power. I often doubted, if I should ever reach Paris. I was just able to endure the journey, with much kind nursing and care. I could do nothing, not even (from Venice) write a line in my Note Book. But a good Providence brought me on.

"I am desirous of returning home, as soon as I may safely,—I trust very soon. I think it is the will of Providence, that I be received again into the bosom of my friends, on my native shores. But I am very contented, wherever I am,—contented to wait the issue. I think my faith was never stronger. Love to all,—*LOVE, LOVE* to all!"

Mr. Stearns had, at this time, many friends in Paris. He

was so anxious to return home, that they made every effort to secure him a passage in the packet, which was to sail from Havre on the twentieth, and in which some of his travelling companions had secured berths. But the vessel was already crowded, and no berth could be obtained. This was a severe trial to his feelings, especially as he now perceived that it would be unsafe for him to attempt the voyage, for several months. But the disappointment was ordered in mercy. For had he set sail on the 20th of June, he would probably have never reached his native shores. He put himself under the care of a distinguished German physician, and composed his mind to remain in Paris till autumn. His situation was made pleasant, and every attention and alleviation was afforded him, which he or his friends could desire.

On the 19th, he writes: "What is before me, my brother, I cannot conjecture. But I cherish the hope of seeing home in October,—hope,—‘hope deferred,’—but still *hope*,—it is a sweet solace to *hope*. Do not doubt, however, that I have every thing to amuse and instruct and comfort me, and make me feel contented where I am. Give yourself not the least uneasiness on this account. I am surrounded with friends who are continually dropping in to look after me, or give me a newspaper, or tell me some American news, and say a kind word, and smile and cheer my spirits. I have, also, an unusually agreeable sense of the presence of our Protector and Father in heaven who feeds the ravens and clothes the lily, feeds and clothes you,—and feeds and clothes me. O, no! I am far from being unhappy or discontented here. You may feel as easy about me, as if I were of your own company, as thriving and prosperous as your utmost wishes. I ride out

every day under the care of Dr. ———; my friends here entertain hopes of my entire recovery. And, notwithstanding I have been given up, and have given myself up so often, there is still an *impression*, a clinging *impression*, that I shall one day have health enough to be useful a short season."

Mr. Stearns had been raised from the borders of the grave so often, and had been so constantly sustained by the hope, though at war with his judgment, of final recovery, that, strange as it may now seem, his friends in America were poorly prepared for the letter which follows, and which is the last he ever wrote.

"Rue Vivienne, No. 48, corner of Boulevard, }  
 "PARIS, June 28, 1837. }

"DEAR BROTHER,

"My last as well as former letters must have led you to anticipate the time as near, when we shall be separated, not by the wide waves of the Atlantic, but by the wider ocean which separates earth from heaven. My old physician, on my last visit, on Monday, intimated that he thought my *lungs* seriously and permanently affected, and seemed to decline to prescribe any further. On my return to my lodgings, my friend who accompanied me, Mr. A——, who understands French perfectly, and had a private interview with the doctor, formally and kindly announced to me the decision. I certainly received it with entire calmness and composure, and during the evening following had none but calm and pleasant thoughts and bright anticipations. It did *not* take me by surprise; it produced no nervous agitations, no alarm, no feeling of hurry or confusion, none of resistance. I rather felt, that

now the day of sorrow is past, and a little season of joyful anticipation remains. And such has been my prevailing feeling ever since. I may be wrong, but I feel that the day of self-examination, and self-humiliation, and anxious mourning for sin are past. I have had a 'heart deceitful and desperately wicked,'—'the *pride* of my heart has deceived me,' and it has been difficult for me to detect its real wickedness. But I think I have seen it,—I am sure I have seen enough to overwhelm me! My spirit has fainted and died within me,—in regret, in grief, in penitence. I have thrown myself, freely and cordially, into the arms of him who came to seek and to save that which was lost,—to save sinners, even the chief,—to save me ;—and then I feel safe, I feel that he forgives me, I feel that he loves me, I feel that he will keep me to the end, and bring me safe to his Father's mansion. And I feel satisfied,—happy ! I have no ravishing delights or anticipations, though my imagination is, at times, sufficiently excited. But I have a calm, unquestioning confidence,—a sweet, holy, heavenly happiness. All with me is bright and cheerful for this world and for another.

"I am here surrounded with kind friends, who will take good care of me while I continue, and who will take good care of what little I have with me, and send all safe home.

"Mrs. C——, who died here in March, was taken home by her friends. Mr. H——, my old class-mate, whom I met in Rome, bright and brisk, but who died here, a few days since, is also taken home. It is a very unimportant matter, but perhaps the same disposition might be made of me."

\* \* \* \* \*

After some further suggestions and directions respecting his



remains, and the few temporal matters he had yet to arrange, he proceeds :

“It is doubtful if I shall write again with my own hand ; and now I was about to write farewells ; but really it is unnecessary, and I am too much exhausted. I restrain my heart, and forbear to give pain, but I have not one sombre feeling, one dark or gloomy emotion.”

He then goes on with some suggestions which he thought might contribute to his mother's happiness,—especially in reference to the management of the little homestead, which is her living. His thoughts, on this subject, are expressed with a particularity which at once discovers the composure of his mind, and the generous interest which he felt in those who survive him. The following is a specimen :

“I think mother has made a good arrangement for the summer. It is well to have the same man, from year to year, if he proves good. I was rather pleased with B—— ; I hope she will find him faithful and capable and enterprising. Is he making any new encroachments on the Old Bush Pasture ? I think he should advance a little every year. \* \* \* \*

“It is a great comfort to me that Mr. —— is settled in Bedford, and will live with mother in such favorable circumstances, and that she will enjoy her own daughter, in the young minister's wife.

\* \* \* \*

“Oh ! I can write no more ! And yet I must,—I must just say farewell, through you, to all.

“Farewell, my dear, good mother ! We shall soon meet with your dear husband and my beloved and revered father. The path to heaven from Paris and from Bedford, is equally

sure,—he will be looking out for us,—kind angels will convey us thither. I thank you for a mother's care and a mother's love ; I could never thank you enough. But we shall know more of this, and talk more of this, and feel more of this, I think, in heaven. Till then, my good mother, farewell !

“Sisters and brothers whom I love, *all, all*, with a brother's heart, farewell ! I rejoice that we *all*, happy family, have hope to meet in heaven. Oh ! should *one* be missing there ! I will not indulge the thought ; no ! we shall all meet ! Till that happy thanksgiving meeting, beloved sisters and brothers, farewell !

“Uncles and aunts, farewell !—and farewell, warm-hearted one, who, if assiduous attention, labor and love could have held me back from the grave, would long have held me fast,—aunt B——, I thank you. Farewell ! We shall soon meet again in joy.

“Farewell, my cousins ! many of whom I know and love and respect.

“And farewell, my dear little nieces and nephews ! Many of you will never know your uncle Samuel. But your parents will tell you of him and you will cherish his memory. May you be early sanctified and prepared for heaven, that happy place, where your uncle hopes to meet and know and love you all ! The Friend of little children bless you, and make you very useful women and men, and very happy !

“Farewell, dear little delicate Ellen, my special care !\* Don't forget your own good mother, nor uncle Samuel. Be a good little girl,—love your Saviour,—always obey God,—do

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\* Only child of Mr. Stearne's eldest sister, who died in January, 1833.

good to every body, and be very happy. My dear little niece, farewell!

"I love the Old South, and have never ceased to remember them in my prayers, once and again, since the morning I became their pastor. A pastor's feelings *are* peculiar. I wish I could address them, and say to them, farewell! I rejoice that they are in the care of so good a pastor. The Lord bless them and him. I would also say a grateful farewell to my special benefactors, Mr. S——, and Mr. F——, and Mrs. G——. My beloved, affectionate, generous friend, ——, I bid you a full-hearted farewell!

"And now, my dear brother, I feel as if I had done a violence to myself this morning. I certainly did not think of writing half so much. I should not have thought it possible,—but the Lord has wonderfully sustained me, and I could no less. It is done,—and I throw off all care, all burden from my mind.

"I have only now to say to you, my eldest, long-tried, affectionate brother, farewell! The Lord bless you, in your person, in your family, in your people, in your profession,—it is a glorious one!—in your own soul, and we shall talk more of these things another day. You have from me a very warm, affectionate, full-souled farewell! W——, farewell!" \* \* \*

Mr. Stearns, having made up his mind that he must die in a foreign land, and having arranged all his affairs, temporal and spiritual, and transmitted his *last farewells* to his friends in America, now sunk very rapidly, and was daily waiting to be gone.

Some particulars respecting his sickness, and the closing scene, have been forwarded by two gentlemen, who, though

comparatively strangers, watched over his last hours, with a brother's fidelity.

"PARIS, July 19, 1887.

"REV. AND DEAR SIR,

"From the letter we forwarded you, nearly three weeks ago, from your late brother, Samuel H. Stearns, you will be undoubtedly prepared for the melancholy news it now falls to our lot to communicate. This dear brother departed this life on the evening of the 15th (Saturday), at about six o'clock. Since he wrote you, he gradually became weaker, and his disease evidently was making rapid progress; however, up to Wednesday, he continued taking his ride. On his return on that day, he was so exhausted as to be obliged to be carried up stairs to his room, and soon to be put to bed. From this time he sunk rapidly. Mr. L—— sat up with him on Thursday night, and Mr. A—— performed the same office on Friday night. We thought him very ill, but even on Saturday morning did not expect the time of his departure was so near. At eleven o'clock on Saturday, we removed him to the sofa, and his bed was arranged; after which he was replaced in it. He then appeared to sleep for a short time. At three o'clock we noticed that he breathed hard, and asked him if we should change his position. He replied, with a feeble voice, 'yes.' We accordingly did so, and, almost immediately after, he became senseless. We addressed to him various questions, but he paid no attention to them, and did not appear to hear them. In this state he continued until he died. Although his breathing was hard, yet he did not seem to suffer pain, but calmly and peacefully breathed his last. We closed his eyes, and saw

that the necessary duties were performed as they should be. On Monday, the 17th, his funeral took place. It was attended by about eighteen or twenty of his countrymen. The Rev. Mr. Kirk, from Albany, performed the religious services. The mortal remains of your brother now lie in the cemetery called Père la Chaise, and the dispositions have been so made, that his remains can be sent to America, should his friends there desire it. Of the state of mind of your dear brother, during his illness, we have, thus far, said nothing; a few words will suffice. He was calm and collected. His firm confidence in his heavenly Father never failed him; and his trust,—humble, hearty and peace-giving trust,—never forsook him. He told the writer, but a few days before his decease, that he had not a moment of doubt or fear; and the night previous to his departure, he said to me, ‘I long to fly, *to fly* into my Saviour’s arms.’ He was visited by various clergymen, during the last two or three weeks of his illness, and all agree in saying, it was a privilege to be with him, and delightful to hear him talk of his ‘going home’ to heaven. Although, in the dispensations of Providence, he breathed his last among strangers, and in a foreign country, we can assure you, that every kind attention that his situation required, and that friends could show, was paid him. This we mention, thinking that it would in a great measure comfort those near and dear to him, and whose privilege and delight it would have been to have ministered to his comfort and wants. But, dear sir, he had him, who

‘above all others,

Well deserves the name of Friend,’

for his consolation and support; and this faithful Redeemer fulfilled graciously his promise. He did *not* leave or forsake

him. In witnessing the illness and death of this friend, well may we say : ' Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.'

" We now enclose you some of your brother's hair which he requested might be sent to his mother. Offering you and other afflicted relatives and friends our sincere and thankful sympathies on this mournful occasion, we subscribe ourselves,

" Very truly, your obedient servants,

" J. T. A——,

" J. P. L——."

The following is a letter of Christian sympathy, to the bereaved mother, from Rev. Edward E. Salisbury, by whose magnanimity and kindness Mr. Stearns was induced to visit and pass the winter in the south of Europe,—and who for many months of alternate hopes and fears, as also in the last extremity, to use the dying words of Mr. Stearns, " has shown himself such as the world exhibits but rarely."

" GENEVA, July 25, 1837.

" MY DEAR MADAM,

" It is the will of God!—how consoling must that thought be to every Christian soul! You have, undoubtedly, received the intelligence, and you are in mourning for a son. I would not have allowed another to communicate to you the sorrowful tidings, had I heard of the event in time for me to write by the last packet. Permit me, now, to taste, with you, the cup of grief, and to look, with you, to those bright consolations which blend themselves with the darkness of this dispensation of our heavenly Father. We did earnestly hope,

and so did your son, that a winter passed in the south of Europe would avail to raise him to health, and enable him to resume those sacred duties after which his heart so fondly longed. His letters must have told you all the hopes and fears which alternately came over him, as month after month passed away,—but all was in vain. \* \* \* On our return northward, it was but too evident that he was failing. Up to the time of his arrival in Geneva, however, he continued to visit all objects of interest in the places through which he passed. It is a delightful reflection to us, that in all the changing scenes of his journeying, in view of all the great works of nature and art disclosed to him, it seemed to be so habitually his practice to pass from the earthly to the heavenly, and to regard the former, in all its fairness and all its grandeur, in a spiritual light, as an emblem and type of the latter. Doing so, he enjoyed much, and I doubt not that he holds a higher place in heaven, grasps, with quicker and fuller comprehension, the glories of that world, for thus gathering out from so large a variety of objects, here below, those traits and foretastes of the higher, the infinite, the perfect, wherein God has not left himself without a witness, ever present among men. But ah, here another thought comes up with bitterness,—had he not consented to accompany us from Paris, he would have met your embraces, and those of all his beloved friends at home, in the bosom of his tenderly-attached family! Dear madam, what can I say? I do but touch a wound which I cannot heal. Was it not the hand of his Father, and your Father, which led him away, never to be restored to your sight on earth? May that same hand pour in upon your afflicted spirit its own healing balm! Here in Geneva we saw him for

the last time, and never shall we forget his parting words, as we shook hands repeatedly and his face bespoke a strife of feelings, not expressed, 'Farewell, farewell, God bless you, the God of your fathers bless you !'

"I will not detail the trials of his interviews with the physicians in Paris,—all must be known to you. After their opinion was given, he sank rapidly, was unable to write, and soon could not speak, for a few minutes together, without great difficulty. I should have gone on to Paris to be with him, thinking I might, perhaps, administer something to his comfort which another, less familiar to him, could not ; but  
\* \* \* \* \* He had, however, every thing which could be provided for him in a foreign land.

\* \* \* \* \* These things are all trifles, still, in comparison with the sources of consolation which he had in the intercourse of his own soul with his God and Saviour. At one time, Mr. A——, asking him if his mind remained calm and his confidence undiminished, he replied that he had not had a moment of fear or doubt ; that on the contrary he enjoyed *peace* ; and then he added, 'It is all of grace, the grace of God.' On the morning of the day which proved his last, Mr. A—— wrote to me : 'Mr. Stearns is happy,—he does not complain or murmur, but says he "longs to fly to the arms of his Saviour."' Mrs. Baird, of Paris, in a letter to one of your son's travelling companions, after he left us, Mrs. Taylor, of Baltimore, writes : 'Yesterday, Mr. A—— was sent for, to be with him in his last moments, which are probably very near, now,—he is unable to leave his bed, and all his symptoms announce that sinking nature is about to give up the struggling spirit she has so long imprisoned. His mind has been, ever



since his physicians pronounced his case hopeless, in a most calm and peaceful frame. His affairs, temporal and spiritual, were entirely arranged; he has told me repeatedly that he would not have one circumstance different, or one pain less if he could. He feels that it is his *Father* who orders all for him, and feels, too, that all is for his good and *absolutely* necessary for him. His situation is truly enviable; his course ended, his work done, his soul ready and longing to be admitted into his Saviour's presence, feeling, that though an unprofitable servant, he is yet accepted through Christ his Lord.' Have you not then, dear madam, every thing to rejoice your heart in the midst of its sorrows? We weep with you at this event,—nature must weep, but joy cometh in the morning;—yes, there will be a day of reunion. If we follow the course of our departed friend, we shall all spend an eternity together in ever-increasing bliss and power to enjoy. Please to remember me with affectionate respect and sympathy to your sons and daughters around you still, and allow me for Mrs. Salisbury and myself, to subscribe,

“Yours, respectfully,

“and with affectionate sympathy,

“EDWARD E. SALISBURY.”

Mr. A——, the gentleman who penned the letter of July 19th, and whose disinterested attentions to the sick stranger during his last residence in Paris, friends can better appreciate than reward, has since returned to America. A few additional particulars have been gathered from him personally. He saw Mr. Stearns on his return to Paris, and was fully impressed with

the belief, that he was far gone in consumption, and could never reach home, if he made the attempt. Mr A——, with other friends, persuaded him to defer the voyage to America, and assisted to make arrangements for his comfort in Paris. He also attended Mr. Stearns in his visits to the physician. At the fourth interview, the Dr., who was a German, and spoke the French language imperfectly, announced his opinion of the case to Mr. A——, in the presence of Mr. Stearns, though the physician's *patois* was not understood by the latter. On their way home, Mr. Stearns inquired of Mr. A——, what the physician said. Mr. A——, thinking that it would be rash and hazardous to declare the whole truth at once, evaded the question. Mr. Stearns became *earnest* and a little excited, as he always was, when a person, from whatever motive, answered him by indirection, and said, "Mr. A——, you do not know me, if you think I *need* to be deceived, and am not prepared for the worst? I would deal *honestly* with you in such a case, and have a right to expect that you will do the same by me." He then asked him if the Dr. thought the disease had reached his *lungs*,—for up to this time, Mr. Stearns, notwithstanding his cough, and other alarming symptoms, was full in the impression that his *lungs* were sound, and that he might hope for recovery, though hope must, for a time, be deferred. Upon this, Mr. A——, as delicately and kindly as possible, announced the opinion that *his lungs* were seriously diseased. Mr. Stearns, with the rapidity of lightning, perceived *the truth* of his condition. He exhibited no sign of agitation. He was silent about *two* minutes, and then said, with great composure, "*now I am happy*,—I know what to look forward to." From that time

he was never heard to express a single sentiment of dissatisfaction or disappointment, but appeared uniformly sustained, cheerful, happy. In the evening the conversation was renewed, and the physician's opinion more fully disclosed. The next day, he wrote his farewell letter. When, with much difficulty, he had completed this last labor of affection, he gave it to his friend to forward. "There," said he, "my last duty is performed." "I shall never forget," said Mr. A——, the expression of his countenance, as he said this, and put the letter into my hands,—he seemed perfectly happy!"

During all his sickness he was calm and full of peace. The evangelical protestant clergyman, whose meeting Mr. A—— attended, used to visit him, and say that he had "never witnessed such an instance of resignation and Christian happiness in his life." Many other clergymen went to see him, and all agreed in the above opinion. Mr. Stearns exhorted them all *to preach the gospel*,—said that *he* "had been an unprofitable servant,—that he wished to recover *only* that he might preach the gospel. He thought that he could preach *now*, as he never did before. His own salvation he considered *wholly* of grace." Mr. Stearns also told his watchers, that "he had a father and a sister and other friends in heaven, who would be looking out for him," and seemed with great satisfaction to anticipate the meeting.

The night before his death, Mr. A—— sat by his side and read to him several hymns and passages from the Bible. Among others, he read the 556th of the Village Hymns, beginning:

"When languor and disease invade  
This trembling house of clay."

When he had pronounced the last two lines of the fifth verse,—

“Sweet to lie passive in his hands,  
And know no will but his;”

Mr. Stearns responded, “sweet, sweet, sweet,” and desired Mr. A—— to pause a few moments, probably, that he might retain the sentiment and stay his soul upon it. He also read to him the first chapter of the second epistle to Timothy. Having read the twelfth verse, “For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep what I have committed to him against that day,” Mr. Stearns desired him to pause on those words, as before. He slept but little during the night, and was able to converse but little. Of the next day,—and of the closing scene, particulars have already been given. After three o’clock, P. M., on Saturday, July the 15th, he seemed to suffer no pain, but, breathing shorter and shorter, went so gradually and gently, that his friends could hardly tell what moment was the last. He died about six o’clock on Saturday evening,—the hour of the day and of the week which of all others he loved.

After a few months, the remains of Mr. Stearns were forwarded, according to his suggestions, to his native country. The last offices of respect and affection, with services appropriate to a family funeral, were paid him by his afflicted friends, at the church of his brother, in Cambridge, on the afternoon of Dec. 26th, 1837, that day being the fourth anniversary of his father’s death. A delegation from the Old South church was present, and the Rev. Mr. Blagden, Mr. Stearns’s successor in office, led the thoughts of the mourners, in the funeral prayer.

An invitation had also been presented by the Old South church and society to deposit the body, with its honored predecessors, in their tomb, in Boston. But as Mr. Stearns did not die their pastor, and had been with them, in actual service, but a little season, and as he was known to have given, for various reasons, a decided preference to another spot,—and as some of his friends and acquaintances thought they should derive a melancholy pleasure from being able to visit the green *grave* of the dead, the invitation was declined.

The mortal remains of Mr. Stearns, after so many wanderings, were followed, by the mourners, to Mount Auburn, and were committed to their long repose beneath its shades just as the evening twilight was shedding unwonted loveliness upon the spot :

—————" Manibus date lilia plenis ;  
 Perpurios spargam flores—————  
 —————et fungar inani  
 Munere."

*Mæ.*, VI., 883—886.

In this beautiful cemetery, among whose hills and dales you have so often roved and mused and communed with God, my brother, may your ashes rest and await the resurrection ! In the storms of winter and in blooming spring, all day and all night long, may an unseen presence watch by the sleeping dust,—and never quit the charge, till

" The last trumpet's joyful sound !  
 Then burst the chains with sweet surprise,  
 And in thy Saviour's image rise ! "

## CHAPTER IX.

## FURTHER NOTICES OF HIS CHARACTER — CONCLUSION.

FOR the gratification of those, who may inquire further respecting the opinions, habits and distinguishing characteristics of Mr. Stearns, brief notices are annexed.

As a theologian, he cannot be classed with any of the *schools*. His *philosophy* differed in some respects from them all. It was his intention, if life should be spared, to present to the public a *system* of ethics which, for several years, he had been studying and maturing in his own mind. He hoped by long and discriminating reflection, to establish some principles in moral philosophy, in which *all* intelligent, experimental Christians would agree.

Nor did he, while cherishing opinions of his own, break recklessly away from the authority of established writers, such as Calvin, Edwards and Locke, but rather looked up to these venerable names, with reverence approaching awe. At the same time, he examined their doctrines and modes of explanation, with severe and patient scrutiny, and made it a rule never to adopt their *symbols* in expressing truth, till satisfied that these were as exact and comprehensive and transparent, as any he could obtain. This, together with a maxim never to color truth, or express *more* than he believed, is among the reasons that his discourses are so free from the technical language of theologians. On the other hand, he was not anxious to avoid, but rather chose the received phraseology, where he was certain,

that it would convey with perspicuousness and precision his own opinions.

Mr. Stearns was cradled in theology. His parents and grandparents and many relatives were of the clerical profession. He was expected, when a child, to give some account of every sermon which he heard on the Sabbath. He was encouraged to read all sides of prominent theological questions, and express his views with the utmost fulness and freedom; he of course entered with spirit into the conflicting sentiments of the day. While yet a child, he made choice of his fathers' God, and, with his parents, was a believer in "the doctrines of grace." During the time of his connection with the university, he adhered, without opportunity for much examination, to the principles in which he had been brought up. But when he commenced his professional studies, his inquiring mind, instigated by views and influences which had just surrounded him, demanded a fresh and thorough investigation of his faith. In doing this, while resting the hopes of his soul upon Christ, he took, *intellectually*, the ground of skepticism. In after years, he doubted the expediency of this course, as inducing a state of mind, not the most favorable to the discovery of religious truth. A devout, humble, docile spirit, accompanied indeed with persevering study and with an independent but responsible judgment, should characterize the disciple in the school of Christ. It may be as unwise to *disbelieve* every thing, till, against all the objections ingenuity can raise, it is *proved*, as to *believe* every thing, till, against inclination and prejudice and determination, it is *disproved*. The medium is, doubtless, the safest course. Let the student in theology open his heart to the reception of truth,—let him invite the influences of heaven

upon his studies,—let him drink deeply and often of the spirit of Christ, and then, without disputatiousness or indifference, examine the doctrines of religion as thoroughly and as independently as he can.

Mr. Stearns, according to the plan he had conscientiously formed for himself, disputed the ground, step by step. He made it a principle to admit nothing, however pleasing to preconceived opinions, till it was proved, and *so* proved, that to his mind controversy could not overthrow it. The process by which he obtained satisfaction was long, laborious, and painful. His text-book was emphatically the Bible. And by degrees, his views became clear, on all prominent points. He sympathized more fully with the principles of the Assembly's Shorter Catechism than with any other systematic exhibition of faith. But while he considered it important to a good minister, that he should be thoroughly persuaded, on all points of metaphysical divinity, and while he adhered, with unyielding attachment, to the opinions which, after long and patient study, he had formed, he believed that the truths held in common, by evangelical denominations, were preëminently the *truths* of the Bible, and should chiefly be illustrated and enforced.

His favorite theological treatises were Butler's Analogy, Calvin's Institutes, Edwards on God's Chief End in Creation, and Appleton's Lectures.

His most frequent themes of discourse and Christian conversation were the doctrine of free and unmerited forgiveness of sin to the penitent, by and only by the obedience and death of Christ; and the special and universal providence of God, which gives the field its flowers and the bird its notes, which numbers the hairs of our heads, and directs our steps. This



latter sentiment, about which for a little season he had some perplexities, was commended to his understanding and his heart, by the circumstances among which his heavenly Father had disciplined him, as well as by the full revelations of the Old Testament and the New. It was so inwoven, in after life, with his habitual feelings, as to become a marked characteristic of his public and private religion.

Mr. Stearns's *piety* was of the *simplest* character. He used no cant phrases,—attempted no exhibition of superior goodness,—was above parade and affectation,—and made it a rule, both in the pulpit and in conversation, never to express by tone, language or gesture, an emotion which he did not feel. Strangers, though they might observe in him a propriety of Christian demeanor, would not, probably, discover at once the depth and fervor of his piety. But no one could be long in his company, without perceiving something of that fulness and heartiness of religious sentiment, and that calm and peace-giving confidence in Christ, which marked his Christian course, and was so conspicuous in his dying hours. His feelings towards God were those of strong *filial love*. He seemed to make him his *confidant* in all things. For many years before his decease, he had scarcely a doubt that he was a *child* of his heavenly Father. But he considered himself an unworthy child, who needed chastisement, and who, through much tribulation, must enter into rest.

He never seemed to be afraid of death, and often, when *ill*, his soul stood waiting, in sweet assurance of hope, to be gone.

In early life, he kept a journal of his religious experiences, but abandoned the practice eventually, on the ground that to write and think so much of one's self must have a tendency to

make one *selfish*. All his papers of this class were destroyed by him, several years before his death, for reasons just suggested, as well as to prevent the possible exposure, at some future time, of his most sacred feelings.

Mr. Stearns's piety was *meditative*, more than is usual, perhaps, at the present day. His nature, disease, education, maxims of self-improvement, and habits of life, disinclined him to constant *action* in the crowd. He loved rather to muse in retirement, to study his own nature, and fashion his character to the example of Jesus. When, from a sense of duty, he *did* go forth, he labored often in the spirit of a martyr. Impressions have been made by his preaching, which time will not efface ; and it is believed, that few ministers of *his age* have been the means of guiding more souls to Christ. For his immediate friends and fellow-townsmen, his emotions were often irrepressibly strong.

Mr. Stearns considered the Sabbath a day of sacred rest for the body and the mind ; nor would he ever, at home or abroad, allow his own convenience to trespass upon its hallowed hours. This season, when not called to labor in the duties of his profession, he used to spend, as also the evening before the Sabbath, in contemplation and devotion, and in reading, ordinarily, no book but the Bible.

His preparations for the pulpit were made with labor. He imbued his soul with the subject of his discourse,—reflected much upon the sentiments he was about to offer in prayer,—studied the hymns and the passages of Scripture which he selected to read, and baptized his spirit into the spirit of the Lord's day. There was, therefore, a remarkable unity and appropriateness and pathos in his pulpit services. The chap-

ter which he read in the opening of public worship in the morning, without comment, as it was expressed with an emphasis which gave the sentiment, and a degree of emotion which secured sympathy, was often heard by his audience with soul-subdued attention.

His sermons were written after much study and preparation of mind. Many of them were arranged, composed and finished, in all but the language, before a word was committed to paper. His texts were not chosen as "a peg to hang a sermon on," but rather as a *germ* of truth, which he was to unfold and exhibit in maturity, with its fruit. His discourses are, for the most part, a *single sentiment*, presented in its relations, illustrated, enforced and applied. Hence, it is often said of him, that he rarely preached a discourse which was not *long* remembered.

"His prayers," says the author of an obituary notice of him, in the Boston Recorder of Sept. 15th, 1837, "were, perhaps, even more remarkable than his sermons. There was no parade of feeling or of words in them, but, without formality, a striking exactness of expression, a childlike confidence in God, and a deep tone of religious emotion. He showed in his prayers the influence of affliction. Sometimes his feelings in supplication were like the sighings of the wind in a harp; for he was always of a pensive spirit, and conscious suffering occasioned a beautiful sadness even in his religious joys."

His style of composition, when he wrote with care, was full but not diffuse, transparent but not sparkling, elevated but not hard to be understood. He neither sought to bring into the pulpit the elegances of a classic diction, nor allowed himself to desecrate the messages of God with coarse and

irreverent familiarity. His thoughts and the medium through which he presented them, were alike dignified and tranquil. There were no lightnings in his discourses, which flashed and all was dark again. A graceful movement of emotion and sentiment, corresponded in progress with his subject. His course was that of a calm, clear river which reflects the trees and cottages and grazing herds of its banks and gives them up in the deep, rich hues of twilight loveliness, flowing on, filling and deepening and growing in majesty and power as it goes.

His *manner*, also, in the pulpit was calm. He made but few gestures, and those for exposition, rather than emphasis. Free from rashness, rudeness or rant, his appearance was that of one who, in conscious unworthiness, was awed, and delivered his sentiments, as the message of God.

Mr. Stearns's mind when unexcited, was thorough, but not rapid, discriminating in its reveries and self-controlled in its musings. When slowly roused,—like a good ship, in a strong wind, kept steady by the ballast, and ever obedient to the helm,—it bore forward with a safe but unfaltering determination.

His exuberant imagination was chastened by a classic and Christian taste. And what is remarkable, while he possessed all the excitability of the poetic temperament, he loved severe science, for its own sake. Metaphysical studies, and above all, the philosophy of man, as an immortal being, were his delight. He applied himself to them for discipline, for pastime, for truth.

He read or looked over many authors and on various subjects; he *studied* a chosen few. In almost every branch of learning he was a general scholar,—in his own profession a

thorough one. A striking illustration of the sentiment, "Some seek truth in books, some in learned men, but what they seek for is in themselves," he studied with unforced application and developed and matured his own soul. In doing this, he found aid as well as pleasure, in biography, especially the biography of distinguished Christians.

Mr. Stearns's tastes and habits were retiring and contemplative. Though much in society, and often thrown by circumstances into the crowding and bustling world, he preferred the fields, the twilight walk with a sister or brother, or the unrestrained and uncompelled musings of his study; and never thought it solitude to be alone.

He appreciated the sympathies and affections of home, and though there was a tinge of melancholy upon his countenance, even at the domestic hearth, his playful humor was ever throwing light upon the shades. The society of his parents, to whom he was a companion when a child, was especially his delight. His father's character, as a pastor and a man, was the model which he most faithfully studied, in the formation of his own.

Though reserved, among strangers, and cautious, perhaps to an excess, against "committing himself to any man," no one enjoyed more highly the converse of amiable and cultivated minds. No one entered more readily into the feelings of warm and good-hearted but *humble* worth, and no one, in all circumstances, was more faithful to confidential trusts. His tastes were so pure and exalted, his grateful affections so full, even to overflowing, that without improper compliances, he made friends wherever he went. They ministered to his wants, as if they were receiving rather than conferring an

obligation ; and when he died there were those who shed the tear of bereavement in the Old World as well as in the New.

The characters which he most loved and admired, were those who regarded truth, integrity, propriety and honor,—who were independent, but not inflexible to reason,—above disguise, in their dealings, but not coarse and obtrusive,—elevated without haughtiness, and generous without self-gratulation. With the mean, the trickish, the double-tongued, the selfish, he had scarcely a Christian's patience.

His character was marked by completeness and proportion. Its beauty consisted rather in the combined *whole*, than in any of its separate parts. Among the more prominent qualities was *reverence*. He could not be abashed by assumed consequence ; but the great and the good, and lawful customs sanctioned by antiquity, and sacred seasons, and sacred places, were treated by him with unfeigned respect and becoming awe. To his mind, there was dignity in years. "He rose up before the hoary head, and honored the face of the old man." It will readily be inferred that he was no ultraist or radical. He thought it safer, as a general rule, to cherish the wheat, till it should grow and exhaust the soil, than run the risk of destroying the crop, by rashly rooting out the tares.

There were some striking *contrasts* in the properties of Mr. Stearns's mind. He united extreme caution and reserve to the most childlike simplicity,—a love of retirement, which was almost seclusion, to superior delight in elevated society and kindred sympathies,—a fondness for the severer studies, attended by an unyielding patience in the pursuit of principles, with that sensitiveness to impression and warmth of imagination which is the prerogative of genius.

There is no desire to represent the subject of this notice as a perfect character. Mr. Stearns had his faults, but they were not conspicuous, nor all of them without apology. Perhaps, he relied too much upon his own judgment. But then his opinions and plans were matured by no ordinary reflection. He sbrunk from the active employments of his profession. But to his imagination, its duties were too great and its responsibilities too awful, for the healthiest constitution rashly to undertake them. If he loved fame, he despised unmerited popularity. If he sometimes offended by the severity of truth, he never took shelter beneath the disguises of hypocrisy.

No man was more sensible of his own imperfections. No man studied himself with more pertinacity and discrimination. No man was less disposed to excuse his own faults, or, generally, more charitable towards the imperfections of his fellow-men.

Mr. Stearns's character was not assumed, but formed ; not created by his own efforts, but developed, pruned and trained. He was always *himself*. Above imitation, he cannot profitably, in all things, be imitated.

Mr. Stearns was about five feet and ten inches in height. His carriage was erect,—his form light and spare,—his head small and well turned,—his eyes blue, large and rolling,—his face habitually pale,—his brow overcast with a pensive but not joyless expression. When animated, his countenance, not remarkably prepossessing by nature, underwent a surprising change. The cheek flushed, the eye stood out, the frame became tremulous with emotion, and, at times, the whole soul seemed to look through the face. His features have never been expressed on canvass. This, friendship may regret ; but there are some traits of his character, and some memorials of

his piety and mind, which will live in the hearts of a few for ever.

In the death of Mr. Stearns, *hopes*, long cherished and long deferred, have at length been darkened, to shine no more. In addition to his natural abilities, he had enjoyed such opportunities for study and contemplation, and had been so long under the discipline of affliction,—which, when improved in a Christian manner, is the best of all schools, to the intellect, to the heart, to the conscience, and to the progress of the soul in holiness,—that his mind was supposed to be stored with many valuable trains of thought, which the demands of his profession would call forth, to the glory of Christ and the church. Expectations of his future usefulness were not a little increased, during his absence, by that property of his mind which fitted him to derive no ordinary benefit from foreign travel. He could not witness the power of God in the deep,—the awful mountains and enchanting valleys of the old world,—the beautiful and magnificent creations of Raphael and Michael Angelo,—the ruins of ancient greatness, sublime in decay,—and not be exalted by thronging associations and emotions. The man, whose “heart throbbed and palpitated,” at its first vision of St. Peter’s and the Tiber,—the man, whose mind, when it woke to consciousness in Rome, forgetful, for the time, of Cicero and the Cæsars, was filled, during all the Sabbath, with Paul,—“every monument, obelisk, column, portico, tower, dome, associated with Paul,”—must enlarge the boundaries of his soul with such scenes and imaginations, or sink beneath the effort to sustain them. Add to all, Mr. Stearns’s prospects of permanent recovery to health, were thought never so great as during the first eight or nine months of his absence from



America. The home of his childhood already bloomed with the expectation of his return. But let us forbear, and bid the swelling waters of grief "be still!" *He is gone*; in the ripeness of his piety, in the flower of his intellect, in the bud of his public usefulness, to fill that station in another life, for which his Father in heaven had trained and prepared him in the present.

This providence, so merciful in many of its circumstances, and yet so trying to the sympathies and affections of friends, without one single doubt, is *just as it should be*. *Why*, after long absence, and distant wanderings, the sufferer should have been brought on so far in his homeward course, as to look upon the ocean which washes his native shores and dream, with emotions little short of rapture,—that in a few weeks he should see the greensward by his father's door,—why the ship which was to have borne him over the Atlantic, was destined with its white sails spread, and many companions of his journeyings on board, to leave the solitary stranger, appointed to die in a strange land, without the parental kiss, or a sister to smooth his pillow, or a brother to pray by his side, *is somewhat mysterious*. Every attention, indeed, was paid him, by his generous countrymen in Paris, and by some who understood not familiarly his tongue. But after all, my brother, "*paucioribus lacrimis compositus es, et novissima in luce desideravere aliquid oculi tui.*"—*Tac. Vit. Ag.*

Surviving relatives will participate in his favorite walks, and listen to his melting supplications, at family prayers, or attempt to sustain his sinking health and cheer away his despondency, *no more!* But they can solace their griefs by profitable recollections of what he did, what he said, and how he

suffered. They can bless God, for the unblemished reputation and the many pleasing traits of character which he possessed. They can imitate his virtues and drink deeply of that spirit which sustained him, through so much affliction, and was all his consolation, in the dying hour ; and they can hope, through the *grace* of God, if faithful to their trusts, for a reunion at last, which can never be broken.

As for those disinterested strangers and friends, who with almost fraternal sympathy, gave comfort to the afflicted, in a strange land,—some delicately, but without reserve, offering their purse,—some with a mother's sedulity studying and preparing every needful alleviation,—some dropping in to cheer the sick, with a word of news from America, to smile upon him, to console him with the *promises* of God, to pray by his side,—others watching day and night by the couch of pain, treasuring up with care the last words of the departing,—closing the eye, and paying the appropriate offices of affection to the remains,—**GOD BLESS THEM!** and do so to them, yea, and more, also, in the time of need !

Let the church, on which he shone for a moment, as their pastor, and vanished out of sight,—let the numerous societies who, for a little season, enjoyed his ministrations,—call to mind the spirit which he breathed, the precepts and doctrines which he taught,—and let him whose star was darkened in its rising, yet realize, from the unclouded firmament in which he shines, the desire of many years, *to be useful for a little season in the world !*

**SELECT DISCOURSES**  
**OF**  
**REV. SAMUEL H. STEARNS.**



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ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE PORTER RHETORICAL SOCIETY, AT  
ANDOVER, SEPTEMBER, 1898.

It is not necessary now to vindicate the importance of learning to a preacher of the gospel. The day has happily gone by, when the few friends of a well-taught ministry were obliged to make frequent contests with ignorance and superstition. The walls by which we are surrounded, and this assembly convened within them, bear ample testimony, that the church now feels a lively interest in the education of her sons, who are destined to serve at her altars.

It is scarcely more necessary here, to defend the merits and urge the claims of that *species* of intellectual culture which this Society is designed to promote. True eloquence is certainly not regarded, by judicious minds, as an ostentatious or a deceitful art. It does not consist in the studied fallacies of speech, the pomp of expression, a minute and trifling attention to words only. It is a correct, sustained, and manly expres-

sion of thought and feeling ; it is the free, natural utterance, we give to the mind, in its highest excitement and boldest efforts.

The common forms of language are well suited to the purposes of business and of ordinary intercourse. A clear and grammatical arrangement of words is sufficiently expressive of our thoughts, in mere addresses to the understanding, in plain reasoning on common subjects, and in philosophical disquisitions. But when the mind glows, in the exercise of its energies on lofty themes, and subjects that deeply affect the heart,—when it addresses man not only as a rational, but an imaginative, sensitive and sympathetic being,—then this ordinary use of language is cold and unmeaning. It fails to convey all that is thought and felt within. New and appropriate modes of expression spontaneously present themselves ; and the mind bathes and sanctifies them in the outflowings of its fulness.

The graces of rhetoric, as they are called, are nothing else than a felicitous communication of those finer forms of thought, which may be easily perceived by minds susceptible of such impressions, though they cannot possibly be analyzed. The peculiar choice and arrangement of words, the tones of voice, the looks, the attitude, the air and manner, which constitute the charm of eloquence, are but the combined representatives of the thinking mind. There cannot be a more ill-founded prejudice, than that which sometimes exists against the cultivation of eloquence, that it is a mere superficial attainment, fitted only for show, and unworthy the attention of men who would be esteemed for sound sense and intellectual vigor. Who does not know, that the mind of Chatham possessed the power of expressing more thought by a single phrase, an into-

nation of the voice, or a glance of the eye, than many of these grave but uncouth prosers could exhibit in a long discourse? Who does not know, that the enchantment by which Garrick held his hearers in spell-bound subjection to his will, consisted in a genius to conceive and represent most fully and vividly the scenes which tame description cannot give? And who that has felt the magic influence of Shakspeare's language, breathing, even in the silent page, but knows that it is the messenger to his soul of more than he can tell, except by a humble reference to the original?

It is not, indeed, in the nature of eloquence to be analyzed, explained and represented, in all its freshness, to a heavy, plodding intellect. While you gaze at it, in the attempt, with scrutinizing eye, it vanishes from your sight. It is like the beauty of motion,—stop it, and it ceases to be,—you may only catch a glimpse as it flits quickly by. But it sends a thrilling impulse to the heart, which is not the less real because it is so hastily given, and leaves an impression that is not the less permanent because the power that made it is so soon removed. The flame that is struck up by the lightning's flash is no less real and efficient, than that which is slowly kindled by a burning coal.

Without descanting further, then, on the characteristics and importance of eloquence in general, I trust it will not be considered presumptuous, if I direct your attention, for a moment, to the *genius of pulpit eloquence*,—or that particular kind of eloquence, which we are expected to cultivate.

It is true, that no system of rules and principles is acknowledged, in any science or art, by which all minds are to be reduced to the same shape, and made to operate precisely in

in the same way. Nor is there any department, perhaps, so limited and refined, as not to admit of a proper development of original genius, and a free exercise of all its valuable peculiarities. Richard Sheridan, Fox, and Burke, stand conspicuous among the distinguished speakers of the British Parliament. Yet Sheridan is not Fox, nor Fox, Sheridan, neither do both united embrace all the excellences of the inimitable Burke. Your own recollections will suggest similar examples of diversified genius in the eloquence of the pulpit. Let every man be bold to be what the God of nature designed that he should,—let him be himself,—and aim only to improve himself.

But there are certain general principles in every department, which none may venture entirely to overlook. The eloquence of the pulpit should always be *calm* and *dignified*. The spirit of our holy religion demands it. The bold flourish of a poetical recital, the passionate starts of an actor in a tragic scene, and the wild rant of an infuriated demagogue, ill accord with those sacred truths which angels bow to learn, and which Jesus himself proclaimed with all the simplicity, tenderness and majesty of God. The man, whose soul has once sunk under the weight of conscious guilt,—who has felt his burthen removed by the tokens of a Saviour's love,—whose bosom has been filled with the influences of the heavenly Comforter,—who has risen in his contemplations to the society of the redeemed above, and united harmoniously with them in their purest adorations of Jehovah,—must suffer an awful incongruity, must do violence to his sensibilities, if with these feelings fresh about him, he comes forth to fill the sanctuary with sounding declamation, noisy rhapsodies and extravagant, incoherent appeals. True piety, indeed, is always calm as the



air of Eden, delicate as the softest music, and elevating as the strains which angels sing; its melody is disturbed, and its influence is broken, by the harsh dissonance of bombastic and vociferating address.

Tranquil dignity is essentially necessary to produce the most desirable effects. The design of preaching the gospel, is not to stir up a momentary, ungovernable excitement; but to make a deep and permanent impression,—to instruct the ignorant, to establish the wavering, to fortify the weak, to attract the attention of the thoughtless, and to bind a world with eternal cords to the throne of God,—to draw out the sympathies of every heart, and weave them around the bosom of one common Saviour. The high-wrought passion, which is sometimes produced, by those preachers who have nothing of Paul but his zeal, and nothing of their imitated Whitefield but his strength of voice, too often comes with the vehemence, and passes away with the rapidity, of a tempest, sweeping the heart of its tenderest sensibilities, and leaving the mind, that has suffered it, but a moral wreck.

The influence of the pulpit on the general character of society, also demands a similar consideration. The present is emphatically an age of action, of excited feeling, of enterprise, of novelty and experiment. This spirit manifests itself in our literature, our systems of education, our forms of business, our politics, and our religion. We have already lost much of the puritanic stability of New England; and it will be well for us, if with it we do not lose those literary, political and religious institutions, which our Puritan ancestors with such proud congratulation have bequeathed us. The consecrated teachers of the people, who have it in their power

almost to form the public taste, to mould the youthful mind and to stamp on the genius of childhood its distinguishing features, should beware, lest, by an incautious influence, they hasten on that sad catastrophe. While they strenuously exert themselves for the salvation of the world, let them do nothing to defeat their purpose. But I must only allude to this subject. The instructions of every week, and the exhortations of every day, cannot fail to be felt; habits begun with religion seldom end with it; and if men are accustomed, from their earliest infancy, to a sort of religious intemperance, to irreverent, disorderly and boisterous harangues, to passionate addresses and preternatural excitement,—God forgive his ministers their mistake, and save them from the responsibility of its consequences.

The exhibitions of the pulpit, which should, therefore, be calm and dignified in their general character, require, moreover, a chaste and elevated style of expression. The purity of divine truth is equally degraded, when decked out in all the gaudy trappings of a harlot, or when clothed in the coarse and tattered garments of barbarity. The exquisite niceties of poetic diction, and the awkward vulgarities of colloquial language are alike unbecoming those truths which inspiration itself has adorned with simple beauty. He who implanted within us a taste for whatever is elegant and sublime, and manifested so much regard to that principle, as to adorn the heavens with sparkling lustre, to paint even the clouds with unrivalled hues, to give every bird its plumage, and every plant its flower, has not lost that regard, nor thrown off his character, in the written revelation of his will. The Scriptures themselves are a standing proof, that piety and a just taste,

instead of being repugnant to each other, are of the same origin, of kindred spirit, and, like twin sisters, exhibit their sweetest charms only when found in each other's embrace.

We shall be safely guided in this respect, if we follow the scriptural example. Much of what scholars consider as beautiful in composition, depends on delicate allusions, and slight references to interesting circumstances, with which they alone are familiar. And no man, in the present exercise of common sense, would think of illustrating divine truths, or any truths, to his hearers, by referring them to books which they have not seen, to names which they never heard, to events of which they know nothing, and scenes which they never witnessed. But the inspired writers have taught us, by their example, that it is possible to draw illustrations from objects and events which are open to the common eye, without descending to what is low and grovelling. The precision of classic elegance, in the selection of words and structure of sentences, would often sound as a foreign dialect on the ear of the unlettered rustic. But God has given to the humble fishermen of Galilee the power of uttering their thoughts in language which is intelligible to most, and offensive to none.

No one book, and perhaps no class of books, has done so much to perpetuate the purity of our language, as the common version of the Old and New Testament. We certainly need not indulge the fears of a certain cardinal, who expressed a reluctance to read his Bible, lest it should corrupt his style. But Christian orators, who would derive assistance in their work from every source which Providence has afforded them, are bound to be familiar, also, with those great masters who have devoted their whole lives to the study and composition of

works of taste and genius. You may not, in the plan of your life, imitate their example ; other and nobler duties call you. But what they have accomplished at such vast expense, you may not innocently despise or neglect. Their works are built on the deep principles of human nature, and neither time nor the caprice of fashion can destroy them. The waves of one dark and turbid ocean of ignorance has already rolled past them, and yet they stand, as at the first, unsullied and unshaken.

Though the preacher may not clothe his sentiments in the choice language of Cicero or Demosthenes, he need not fear that his influence will be impaired by something of that mental refinement and elevation which is imperceptibly acquired in their society. In his preaching, he must descend, indeed, towards the capacity of his hearers, but only so low as to reach and raise them up. It is an idle notion, that to improve the character of the multitude, one must condescend to be as rustic and as vulgar as they.

Besides composure and dignity in its general character, and a chaste and elevated style of expression, the eloquence of the pulpit demands *freshness* and *energy* of thought. It is a pitiable mistake, that nothing more is expected of the appointed teachers of Christianity than a bare collection of common-places, and trite illustrations, familiar even to the mind of childhood. The first principles of our religion are few, and may be familiar. But Jesus of Nazareth always adapted them to circumstances, and gave them an air of novelty, and drew illustrations from every object around him. He expects the same from his disciples, who are authorized to preach in his name. He still speaks more eloquently in the voiceless

page, than that tongue which does but echo the thoughts which have descended and are descending from generation to generation.

The topics of the pulpit do not often require elaborate and learned discussion ; much less that subtle, metaphysical reasoning, in which some men draw out their minds to a mathematical point, and then look up with half amazement, that the people do not seem to follow them. The young and the old, the learned and the ignorant, the wise and the foolish, do not assemble together on the day of sacred rest, to be entertained with ingenious speculations, with able controversial discourse, or profound dissertations on subjects foreign to their interests. But they expect that the truths which they have read, as variously represented in the Bible, will be brought home to their own bosom, applied to their own situations, interwoven with the objects and events with which they are familiar, and bound to their hearts by principles on which they daily act, and emotions which they daily feel.

The institution of the ministry was especially designed to perpetuate a class of men, who should be able to apply the principles of Christianity to the ever-varying circumstances of the world, and to adapt them to the intellectual habits of men of every description, in every age, and in every land. Here, then, opens a field of thought wide enough for the proudest genius to range in, subjects enough on which he may feed his growing strength without satiety, scenes of interest to exercise and to task his highest powers. What ! shall every other profession, and every department of science and literature daily exact the ingenuity and call forth the untried efforts of small and great, and exhaust the resources of the richest

minds ;—and must the preacher's office be filled by men content to repeat from year to year the same remarks which their fathers and fathers' fathers have repeated for ages before them ? Shall infidelity itself grow skilful to present her objections to the truth, in new and attractive forms ;—and will the devoted advocates of the truth talk on with a sameness that wearies even the ignorant and the credulous ? Forbid it, conscience ! Forbid it, heaven !

Another characteristic of sacred eloquence, and perhaps the most important of all to success in the business of the pulpit, is *earnestness*. Religion is not a system of abstract precepts and propositions, on which one may discourse with as much indifference as he would demonstrate a mathematical problem, or discuss a question in political economy. It properly affords no subjects on which the essayist or the scholar may play his part, and furnish amusement for a vacant hour. It comes to us as an angel from the upper world, bearing tidings of thrilling interest, telling us of our own immortal destiny, and opening a pathway to the skies. We receive it, if we receive it at all, into our tenderest sympathies, and give it a welcome entrance.

The preacher is supposed to have *felt* its influence, and to speak from the experience of his own heart. Men look for expressions of feeling, in harmony with the truths he proclaims. He is surrounded by beings, formed like himself with capacities for eternal joy, and exposed to the danger of eternal woe. Heaven opens to their faith, and Jesus, with the benignity of God and the sympathy of man, is seen bending to invite them thither. The world allures but to deceive,—the spoiler ceases not from his insidious work,—and the abyss beneath, heaving its terrific clouds of darkness, reveals the second death. Can

he speak, and his soul not be moved? Can words alone be eloquent on such themes as these? It is the melting eye, the glowing cheek, the fervent look, the earnest voice, the whole man vibrating in every nerve, and moving right on with unconscious power, that must give to such truths the form of eloquence. It is not the clamor of declamation,—it is not the language of extravagance or bold metaphor,—it is not theatrical display,—it is not passion,—it is not poetry,—but it is simple *earnestness*.

I am aware that I have now little more than taken a hasty glance at the genius of pulpit eloquence, and perhaps refreshed your memories with some of the principles which have hitherto guided the efforts of this Society. Your own minds, however, will at once follow out the familiar hints which have been offered. Physical debility, if nothing else, would have prevented me from that intensity of thought, which originates new ideas on trite subjects, and gives to old truths the freshness of new relations. But there have lived at different times a favored few, who exhibit in their own example the best illustration that has ever been made of our subject, and to whom we may well resort to help our conceptions. Such a man was Massillon, of whom we have read, that when he preached, princes came to listen. Such was Spencer, whose early death sent a mournful note to our shores. Such was Payson, whose expiring voice has not yet died away on our ears. And such, too, was once a youthful preacher of our land, who is now, I trust, bowing with these before the throne, mingling with them in their songs, and ascribing his salvation to that Saviour, whose divinity he doubted when on earth.

I have spoken, it is true, of that eloquence, which it is our

duty to study and attempt, rather than our hope to attain. There are many circumstances in the life of a Christian minister, peculiarly unfavorable to the highest style of dignified and simple eloquence. We shall, no doubt, suffer many embarrassments, which will repress our energies, and hinder us from success. But, though we cannot hope to realize even our present conceptions, we must not yield in sullen despair,—we will not shrink in tame neglect of our duty. The thought of a world in sin may sometimes stir up all our sympathies, and urge us to those wild and unnatural efforts, which defeat their object; but we will still remember, that Jesus was never rash. His eloquence was always calm,—and he, who spoke as one having authority, knew best how to affect the human heart. We shall often be oppressed with thronging cares, and prevented from enriching our minds and improving our taste in the study of the standard works of genius; but let us not neglect the opportunities that are given to enter those splendid temples, and, bearing away their offered riches, consecrate them to Christ and the church. There must come those dreary hours, when our enfeebled bodies will sink under the burdens of an office whose duties never cease,—and our minds, driven to extreme lassitude, will fail us,—all that we knew be gone from our recollections,—and the few thoughts, that float in dim vision before our eyes, refuse to take form or name; but we will, at least, open our minds to the impressions of surrounding objects, and learn something even from the consciousness of our own imbecility. The heart, too, will sometimes faint, or become coldly indifferent, in the reaction of habitual excitement,—our sensibilities grow dull,—the sublime truths of religion cease to exhilarate us,—and the affecting scenes of



sinful, suffering humanity only shroud us in tearless gloom ; but let us then drink more deeply at the fountain of devotion, and, with struggling efforts, gather that warm and vital earnestness, which can make us eloquent. However we may be situated, wheresoever God in his providence may place us,—on the plains of Hindoo, on the hills of Palestine, in the wilds of western America, in the islands of the distant ocean, or among the churches that our fathers have left us,—we will not fail to exert our strength in the use and improvement of the talents which our Creator has given us for his service ; and when, at last, any of us may be allowed to stand before his tribunal, and present a few souls, saved through his blessing on our efforts,—our toils shall all be forgotten,—our labors will be too richly compensated,—and our hearts, more eloquent than our tongues, shall say for us, “ Not unto us, but to thy name, be all the *glory*.”

## SERMON I.\*

UNTO ME, WHO AM LESS THAN THE LEAST OF ALL SAINTS, IS THIS GRACE GIVEN, THAT I SHOULD PREACH AMONG THE GENTILES THE UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF CHRIST.—EPHESIANS 3: 8.

WE are often made to feel that there is an unseen power that guides the affairs, and controls the destinies of men. When we look out upon their various situations and employments, and reflect upon the apparent causes of their condition, we cannot avoid the impression, that there is a mysterious agency, which, overruling their errors and faults, as well as their wiser caution and virtue, assigns to each individual his appropriate place. One man seems directed, by the very circumstances of his birth and education, to pursue, as his fathers have done before him, the quiet occupation of a husbandman, —to feed his flocks and herds,—to till the ground, and gather in the fruits of the earth,—to labor hard, and to enjoy, in peaceful obscurity, the product of his labor ; while another is borne along, unconsciously, by successive events, to publicity and fame, to cares and disquietude. One finds himself moving foremost in public concerns, toiling incessantly for others, and oppressed with the burden of responsibility and business which his station brings upon him ; and another, perhaps the companion of his boyhood, scarcely conceiving that it might be otherwise, has little more care than to spend the hours of the passing day, and to receive with gladness the reward of his service at night. One finds it convenient and suitable for him to employ

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\* For the arrangement of the Sermons, &c., see the Preface.

his thoughts in the necessary business of honorable merchandize ; and another to exercise his skill in some of the arts which afford comfort and ornament to mankind. One is led, as by an invisible hand, to relieve the pains and quiet the distresses of the sick and dying ; another is instructed to plead the cause of the injured and aggrieved ; and to some, moreover, the task is assigned, and the favor is given, to preach among men the unsearchable riches of Christ. All are equally free in their choice, and yet all are alike governed by the irresistible force of circumstances. Each one is made to fill up his part in the plan, and to accomplish, in his place, the purposes of Providence.

With characteristic humility and gratitude, the apostle acknowledges the goodness of God, in making him a minister of the gospel. He speaks of it as a *privilege* of which he is unworthy. It is a *grace* given unto him. "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." There is a frankness and simplicity in this acknowledgment, which forbids the imputation of arrogance or vanity. The history of his life,—his labors and privations and sufferings,—is sufficient testimony that the privilege of which he speaks is not one which the avaricious or the indolent or the ambitious would covet. Neither worldly honor, nor ease, nor emolument, could have been the portion of the man, who was "in deaths oft, who five times received forty stripes save one, thrice was beaten with rods, once was stoned, thrice suffered shipwreck, a day and a night was in the deep, was in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by his own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils

in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." It were surely absurd that such a man should glory in any thing but the cross of Christ. There must be some intrinsic excellence in preaching these unsearchable riches. Paul must have found his pleasure and privilege, only where succeeding preachers may expect chiefly to find theirs,—in the nature of his work,—in the character of the gospel,—in the object it aims to accomplish,—in the certainty of ultimate success,—in the immediate good which he may personally promote,—and in the final reward. In short, his heart must have glowed with admiration and gratitude, as he wrote the words of the text, in perception of the just *importance* of preaching the gospel :—a subject to which we may, not inappropriately, this morning, direct our attention.

I. It may be perceived, in the first place, in the character of the gospel itself. There are no subjects so universally and deeply interesting, or sublime, as those which relate to the soul, to God, and to a future state. However men may affect indifference towards them, there is no man who does not sometimes think of them ; and none can soberly think of them, and feel that they are of trivial importance. Even the most skeptical will often reason with profound interest on the nature, the cause, and the purpose of his being,—on the nature of that which thinks and feels within, and on its probable destiny, when all which now constitutes his visible existence shall be as the dust that he treads beneath his feet. These, and their kindred subjects, have ever attracted the attention, not only of the vulgar, the ignorant and the superstitious, but of the

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learned, the wise and the great. They have been favorite topics of philosophical inquiry. They have entered largely into all the systems of philosophy which have been framed by the various ingenuity of man. They have tasked and overpowered the intellect of the strongest and most acute. But the simplest, the most consistent, and the most satisfactory representation of them is to be found in the instructions of Christ. The wisest and most painstaking philosophers have been surpassed, on these subjects, by the unlettered prophet of Galilee. His doctrine has taken a stronger hold on the minds and hearts of men, and exerted a more extensive sway over the human understanding, than any theory the world has seen. With all its imputed difficulties and apparent mysteries, it is yet the most satisfying to the anxious inquirer, and the most sublime, as a mere subject of intellectual contemplation. It comes to us with the beauty, the symmetry and the grandeur of heaven. It comes to us, too, as a messenger of kindness. In its distinguishing characteristics, it is a system of benevolence. It comes to man with the annunciation, "Behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy;" and it leaves him, when it leaves at last, as the influences of the resisted Spirit are withdrawn, only with the pitying lamentation, "O that thou hadst known, in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace! How often would I have gathered thee, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings!" They who have turned from it, often look back as towards a friend whom they have renounced. With all the objections which they have gathered in their minds and hearts against it, they will sometimes cast a lingering look backward, as if, after all, there were true comfort there.

The gospel does indeed recognise some most appalling

truths. For it comes to seek and to save that which was *lost*. It represents man as a sinner against his Maker, fallen and debased, and exposed to a punishment coextensive with his wickedness, and without any limit. But these truths do not constitute its peculiarity. They are common to it, in some form and degree, with all systems of religion, and all systems of philosophy. Every where the world bears palpable marks of wickedness and degradation. Every man is, to some extent, conscious of sin, and as conscious of meriting the reward of sin. It is for this, that the world smokes with sacrifices, and groans with penances. It is for this, that the ignorant heathen do such violence to their own nature, and writhe under self-inflicted torture before their gods. It is for this, that the learned heathen reason so absurdly of the transmigration of souls, and a state of purgatory. The doctrine of a hell, or place of punishment for the spirits of the wicked dead, has ever been associated, among pagans, with the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. The gospel has thrown the clear light of heaven on the depravity and wretchedness of men, and exhibited the truth respecting them in its real character. This constitutes indeed the necessity of the gospel, but does not make an essential part of it. It is the disease which Jesus of Nazareth clearly described, when he came to apply the remedy. The preacher of the gospel must imitate his example, and distinctly and faithfully, and often exhibit the guilt, and the dangerous, miserable condition of fallen man ; but the apostle would never have exulted in his work, if here it must stop. It were cruel to tell men of their wretchedness, if we must leave them without a helper. It were basely cruel to be ever reminding them of the deadly disease of their souls, if we

could not remind them, also, of the "balm that is in Gilead, and of the Physician there."

The distinguishing character of the gospel is found in its doctrine of the forgiveness of sin. In this are treasured its unsearchable riches. It is one of the fearful evils of sin, that it enslaves the sinner, both by diminishing his power to resist temptation and by disinclining him to repent ; because the very thought of holiness, to which he should return, does but make him more uncomfortably sensible of his guilt. Nor can he well command his heart to turn back in penitence and love to that Being, whom his troubled and self-reproving conscience teaches to regard as inexorably just, and pledged to inflict upon him the merited punishment. It is the gospel only that meets his case. Without weakening the sanctions of virtue, or impairing the just government of God, or representing him as tamely indulgent towards iniquity, it takes from him all that is insuperably repulsive to the sinner, and exhibits him in the benignancy of a father, seeking (by a self-sacrifice) to win back the prodigal son, and embrace him again as his own. It offers encouragement to repentance, by a free and full forgiveness of all that is past, and clothes the Divine Being in the most lovely and attractive mercy, to soften the sinner's heart, and bind him in penitence and faith to his God. It comes to the conscience-stricken and sorrowing one, and wipes away his tears, telling him of hope. It comes to the hardened and desperate sinner, and assures him that there is a better way for him. It comes to the proud man, and tells him of a generosity and proffered mercy, which cannot degrade him, but may melt his heart into grateful and ingenuous humility ; which will elevate him in the true dignity of his feelings and character, while it

brings his selfish haughtiness low. It comes to the most debased and miserable outcast, and tells him, that while all others have deserted him, his Maker has not ; even he may be recovered to the honor and the joys of the sons of God. It exhibits the beauty and sublimity of holiness, a glorious combination of justice and compassion, which, if the heart were not essentially depraved, the otherwise amiable and noble-minded could not contemplate without admiration and love.

II. The importance of preaching the gospel may be perceived, in the second place, in the object it aims to accomplish. By exhibiting the nature of holiness in the character and work of Christ, and the malignity of sin in his death on the cross, it aims to awaken the consciences of men ; and by proclaiming forgiveness to the penitent and believing, and setting forth the benignity of God, in that sacrifice by which only he could be just and yet justify one who has sinned, it aims to bring them to repentance, and reconcile them to God, and reclaim them to the purity and elevation and happiness of holiness. It aims to recover them from the servitude and degradation of inordinate passions and appetites, by inspiring within them a spirit of confiding love to God, which will regulate all other affections and harmonize all other feelings of the soul. It is the object of the gospel, not to exercise an arbitrary authority over the minds of men, or bind them down under burdensome and servile rites, or force them to render the abject homage of a superstitious devotee, or confine them to exact and rigorous precepts ; but by the manifestation of kindness, and the offer of pardon, to call forth a holy emotion, that will bring them willingly and heartily to God and to duty. This is that liberty wherewith Christ maketh his disciples free : and they whom Christ thus



maketh free are free indeed. The gospel meets men not as a judge, but as a friend and mediator. It cannot be satisfied by rebuking a few prominent vices, intemperance, fraud, licentiousness ; but aims to purify the fountain from which these streams of pollution flow. It is not the object of the gospel to strike away here and there an unsightly limb from the tree of depravity, and prune it into fairer proportions ; but to root out the noxious plant. It would reform men, in the only way in which they can be truly and thoroughly reformed, by reforming their desires. It aims at nothing less than a *change of heart*.

It is the avowed object of preaching the gospel to affect a radical change in the heart of every man, and with it to change his character and influence and condition and prospects. It is to lead the avaricious man to lay up for himself treasures in heaven ; the ambitious man to strive for that crown of glory which fadeth not away ; the man of pleasure to regale himself with those pleasures which flow perpetually at God's right hand ; the weary and fainting to repose with calm confidence in him who giveth heavenly rest ;—it is to teach the high-minded to discern what is noble in holiness ; and make the mean-spirited look up and feel himself immortal, and estimate the value of his soul ;—it is to sweeten the sympathies of domestic and social life ; to make home and the family the dwelling-place of peace and harmony and honor and joy ;—it is to fill the city and village with just such families ; and fill the state with just such cities and villages ; and cover every land with just such states ; it is to exchange the hovel of filthiness and debauchery, and the hut of the savage, for the purest and most honorable dwelling on earth ; and the temple of heathen abominations, for a sanctuary of hallowed worship of

God and his Son ; to cheer the drooping Hindoo, and warm the heart of the Laplander with the same holy spirit ; to melt down the wall of selfishness that surrounds the heart of man, and cause the waters of benevolence every where to flow ; to break off the chains of the bond-slave, and bid Ethiopia stretch forth her hands to God ; to inspire the song of redeeming love where the war-whoop echoes in the forest ; to make the desert blossom as the rose, and the islands of the sea be glad ;—it is to renovate the world ; to make the whole world prosperous, the abode of love, love to men and love to God,—to make this earth a nursery of souls for heaven.

III. The importance of preaching the gospel is manifest, in the third place, in the certainty of ultimate success. Never was there a bolder enterprise, or to mere human wisdom, one more chimerical, than when, under the authority of their crucified leader, the eleven uneducated apostles, with a few adherents like themselves, of the lower ranks, set forth on the purpose of changing the hearts, the religions, the institutions, the manners, and the character of the world. Without wealth, or learning, or power, save the simple power of preaching Christ crucified, in the midst of a city and country whose government and religion and prejudices were all against them, they commenced their work. In a few weeks their acknowledged numbers are increased to more than three thousand ; they spread themselves through the land ; city after city yields to their persuasion and example : persecution rising in wrath cannot stop them ; refined Athens, and polished Corinth, and lordly Rome, listen to the preaching Jew, and receive his doctrine ; philosophers and statesmen are converted to the faith ; and soon the wide empire formally, and by authority

exalts Jesus of Nazareth as the King of kings. In the most discouraging moments, we may look back, and strengthen our courage on this first triumph of the gospel. And though Christianity suffered a shock in its first contest with the superstitions of the world, and, during the ages of darkness that came on, its light shone but feebly amidst the gloom, it was yet, meanwhile, fastening itself stronger on the minds of men ; and when the day of Reformation dawned, it was found to be not then the question, whether Christ was the true teacher, but what he had taught. His religion, though perverted, became woven into the fabric of society ; and, at this day, the governments and institutions of those nations which have the most commanding influence in the world, are based on its principles ; and those who have imbibed its spirit, among these nations, are rising in their united strength, to carry on the work of their Master to its final victory.

The religion of the gospel is a self-propagating religion. They who have truly received it, feel themselves bound to teach it to others ; and these again, when they feel its power, must teach it to others still. But it is not its essential nature, nor its past history, nor its present condition, on which we build our faith of certain success. We have a more sure word of prophecy. It is predicted, in that book, whose predictions have never failed, that "the heathen shall be given to the Son for his inheritance ; the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ ; all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord." And with these predictions we cannot doubt. The difficulty of success, the opposition of men, their various wickedness, the perversions of the gospel, and the conflicting opinions and personal conten-

tions of those who profess to receive it, do not stumble us. If the great principle which the gospel assumes, be true,—if this be a fallen, depraved world,—these things are just what we should expect; instead of making us waver, they do but confirm our faith. We might rather doubt, if they did not occur. He who has so well described the disease, justly claims our confidence in the remedy which he assures us will succeed. The work is God's, and, in the language of the apostle, we are but co-workers with him. We are engaged in no doubtful cause. Notwithstanding the opposition of its enemies, and the heartlessness of professed advocates, and the ever-recurring faults and mistakes of its real friends, it will go on, till the object which the gospel aims to accomplish is gained, and the world yields to the dominion of the Prince of peace.

IV. The importance of preaching the gospel is also apparent, in the fourth place, in its immediate influence. Wherever the gospel is faithfully and kindly preached, it will certainly be productive of good. It ever has been, and it ever will be. In the presence of the holy Jesus, the most profligate and abandoned will often stand abashed, and feel "how awful goodness is." Vice will be restrained, though it be not destroyed, and checked in its growth, though it be not eradicated. The poor will be made more contented in their privations, and the laborious more patient in their toils; the heart of the mourner will be comforted; the child of gaiety and pleasure be led to walk in wisdom's ways of pleasantness; the proud, and the obdurate, and the selfish, will not always be insensible to the voice of mercy: here and there an individual, among the many who are hungering and thirsting for some unknown good, will be made to hunger and thirst for righteous-

ness and be filled ; and though there be few that be saved, that joy will sometimes be raised in heaven which thrills the spirits of angels over one sinner that repenteth ; some ransomed ones will be sustained and cheered in their pilgrimage along the strait and narrow path ; some pious souls helped on to heaven.

V. But the final reward ! The last consideration that evinces the importance of preaching the gospel is, its final reward. And next to that which flows directly and perpetually from God, what richer reward can there be of this service than that which results from the ever-growing knowledge of its happy effects ! No sublime enterprise was ever fully comprehended in its commencement. The discoverer of our continent, in his most sanguine moments, and when his imagination was boldest, did not truly realize the benefit he was conferring upon mankind. And the Pilgrims who first stepped upon our land, though they indulged their excited fancy to the utmost, and talked of gold, and painted the land a paradise, had plainly no adequate idea of the scenes that are now spread over it. What notion of the effects which have already resulted from the preaching of the gospel could have been formed in the minds of the fishermen of Galilee ! Our conceptions of good things that are to come are always inadequate, because, though large and perhaps in many respects unreal, they are necessarily faint and indistinct. They are at most but a dim outline, and must wait for the actual occurrence to fill them up. What adequate idea can we have of the salvation of a soul ? What idea of a blessing that is to extend and increase eternally ? It is only when we come to stand with the redeemed around the throne, that we shall seem to begin to comprehend it. What

emotions will there swell his bosom who has been permitted here, by the preaching of the gospel, to turn many to righteousness! Nay, we shall not then understand its importance, we shall not then comprehend the blessing. And that new song which they sing there, will be for ever new, for the grace it commemorates will be for ever expanding; and each new discovery will raise the song anew, more sweet, more loud, more joyful, as the blissful throng live on, for ever and for ever on, harping and singing as they go all down the pathway of eternity, Worthy is the Lamb!

But if the preaching of the gospel be important, if it be a privilege to herald forth the good news, the glad tidings of great joy, if it be a privilege to be the messenger, what must it be to receive the message? My hearers, and now, my people, these glad tidings are proclaimed to us. Let us listen with humble admiration. Let us welcome the grace. Let our hearts beat quick and warm in grateful love. Let us rise, the penitent, affectionate, confiding, devoted, heaven-aspiring disciples of Christ. O, if God will here bless his word, by whomsoever proclaimed, if he will bless the ministry that commences in weakness to-day, and gather us when it is closed, as pastor and people, with the redeemed above, we shall know more, and feel more the value of the unsearchable riches. O, if he will but grant us that blessing, with eloquent hearts we will speak his praise, with gushing gratitude we will sing the new song, with humble joy we will together lay our crowns at the feet of the Lamb, and say, "Not unto us, not unto us, but to thy name be all the glory."

## SERMON II.

YEA, AND IF I BE OFFERED UPON THE SACRIFICE AND SERVICE OF YOUR FAITH, I JOY AND REJOICE WITH YOU ALL. FOR THE SAME CAUSE ALSO DO YE JOY AND REJOICE WITH ME.—PHILIPPIANS 2: 17, 18.

THE epistle of Paul to the Philippians is a beautiful specimen of the spirit which the gospel inspires. He seems to have felt for them a peculiar attachment, and to have regarded them with more complacency than any of the churches he was permitted to establish. He addresses them in the most affectionate and endearing manner: "My brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and my crown." They were a striking contrast to the more factious and troublesome church at Corinth. In writing to them, the apostle had no occasion for severity or excessive caution, for complaint or rebuke. His feelings were perfectly undisturbed. His letter throughout breathes the spirit of calm, Christian love. He writes as a friend to friends, devoted and kind himself, and confident of a reciprocation of the sentiment he utters. "Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all. For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me."

The whole epistle, and especially the sentences which have been chosen for our text, happily exhibit the relation of pastor and people, and that mutual confidence and sympathy

which ought ever to subsist between them. You will not regard it as unsuitable to the present occasion, and I hope it may be profitable to us, to direct our attention, this afternoon, to some considerations which manifest their importance.

It is not for us to discuss the propriety of the pastoral office. We might, indeed, see some reasons for its expediency, or, perhaps, for its necessity. But it has been established by one who is infinitely wiser and better than we. "When he ascended up on high, he gave gifts unto men,—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers,—for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." The apostle employed one evangelist for this special purpose, that he should travel throughout the extensive island of Crete, and set in order the things that were wanting, and ordain elders in every church. On his return from Macedonia to Jerusalem, as he passed near Ephesus, the same apostle called together the elders of the church there, and exhorted them to take heed to themselves, and to the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers. Churches were originally organized, and officers appointed in them, by divine authority. Under the name of elder, overseer or bishop, pastor or minister, one was to preside in their assemblies, lead their public devotions, repeat to them the doctrines of revelation, administer the sacraments, and watch over the spiritual interests, and devote himself to promote the spiritual good, of the community. In this sacred station many have labored, and many are laboring to advance the kingdom of Christ. However unworthy one may feel of its honor and authority and responsibility,—which, though inseparable, are often equally burdensome,—he may not shrink, when called to it by the



providence of God, nor by tameness and distrust and inertness while in it, prostitute his noble office. Nor may the people, when they have called him to it, and clothed him with the pastoral vestments, reluctantly yield to him his proper influence ; lest in degrading him, they degrade themselves, and in desecrating his office, they desecrate their own religion, which has constituted, and which sustains it, or in despising him that is sent, they despise him that sent him.

But the influence that appropriately belongs to him is chiefly a moral influence. There are no specific statutes that prescribe or limit it. It depends on the principles of the gospel ; it is sustained and upheld by the authority of Christ, and is best exerted where that mutual confidence and sympathy prevail which the gospel is adapted to inspire.

The duties of a Christian minister are, in many respects, peculiarly delicate. He labors not for the body, but for the soul ; not for the understanding, but for the heart. He appears before the people, not to amuse their fancy, or to afford an hour's intellectual entertainment, but to make them better. He is to utter truths which he might not speak on his own authority, and in a manner which he might not assume in any other capacity. He comes to the people, as the messenger of God, to read to them his law, to proclaim his promises, and to repeat his awful denunciations. He may never expect to perform the services of the sanctuary, without disquieting the minds and disturbing the feelings of some who hear him. When he presents the demands of the law, he urges claims, to which few are willing to yield. When he sets before them the beauty of holiness, there are some that will see no beauty there, and some that will be made painfully conscious of their

own deficiency. When he describes the deformity of sin, there are those that will turn from it in distress, because it reminds them of their guilt. If he speaks of the joys of heaven, there may be not a few that will hear with uneasiness, because those joys do not harmonize with the feelings of their hearts; and they will be made unhappy from the conviction which settles upon them, that they cannot now think of those joys as joys for them. If he speaks of the woes of hell, he knows it is a subject awful and appalling to the minds of all, most repulsive to many, and which some cannot hear without writhing in agony, because the description of those for whom that place is prepared, embraces themselves. Even when he speaks of a Saviour, the very name of Saviour implies that this compassionate one has come to *save* only those that are *lost*. Indeed, the minister of Christ is always acting upon the hearts of men,—he is concerned with their desires and aversions, their joys and sorrows, their hopes and fears,—he is always touching their tenderest feelings. In the discharge of his duties he may often afford comfort, but he will often give pain. He may strengthen the hope and delight the feelings of some, while at the same time he inculcates principles that take from others their dearest opinions, and their highest expectations for eternity. There are no subjects on which men are, in many respects, so sensitive, as on those of religion. The Christian minister certainly needs all the magnanimous devotedness and generous affection of the apostle in our text, to enable him well to perform his delicate task; and the people need to cherish all that reciprocal confidence and affection which nature will allow, to enable them to receive from him with meekness and kindness and profit the service which he aims to bestow.

The subjects which the gospel embraces, or with which it is immediately connected, are many of them infinite in their extent, and beyond our entire comprehension. They are things, that are unseen and eternal. They relate to invisible spirits, to boundless space, to endless existence, to unlimited knowledge, to almighty power, and to that wisdom which sees intuitively the harmony and mutual adaptation of all the constituent parts of universal being. They are above the grasp not only of the human, but of any finite mind. "Who can, by searching, find out God? who can find out the Almighty to perfection?" Wherever we stop, in our inquiries, mysteries lie beyond. If we would go further, and were able to solve one of them, another lies next beyond it, equally amazing, still tempting the curiosity, still exhausting the energies, disquieting the feelings, and baffling the ingenuity of man. Even the work of redemption, however simple it may be in its application to our wants, and however grateful it is to the penitent heart, exceeds in the extent of its relations our utmost capacity. 'It is an unfathomable mine. The angels desire to look into it. We may see that there are riches there, but those riches are unsearchable. In discoursing on such subjects, he who spake under the influence of the Spirit of God, was constrained, as he saw them extending boundlessly, and rising stupendously before his mind, to stop and exclaim: "O, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" He felt, too, that the last answer to be given to the captious and persevering disputer must be, "Nay, but who art thou, O man, that repliest against God!" Well, then, may we be humble when we read, and simple-minded when

we hear. There can be nothing more subversive of the design of the Christian ministry, than that spirit of mutual distrust, and self-vindication, which prompts the preacher in all his ministrations to disguise his ignorance, and seem to know every thing within the limits of theological inquiry, and to assume the appearance of explaining things inexplicable; and which prompts the hearers to spend their thoughts in canvassing his doubtful statements, and makes them dissatisfied and indisposed to apply to themselves what is plain, because there are mysteries yet unexplained, and difficulties yet unremoved. The consecrated interpreters and preachers of the word may labor to know more, and to impart such instruction as they are able, on all those mysterious subjects that are not absolutely without the limits of human investigation, that, by enlightening the understanding, and elevating the mind, they may improve and comfort the heart; but after all, neither they who preach nor those who hear, may indulge the feeling that there ought to be no obscurity remaining. For, in the language of the apostle, "We know in part, and we prophesy in part."

The first principles of the gospel are indeed few, and in their application, simple. "The way-faring man, though a fool, need not err." It is with these principles, chiefly, that the flock is to be fed. Though regarded by many as trite and uninteresting, they are the truths which from age to age have saved and comforted the souls of men. They are the truths by which sinners have been reclaimed, and by which the world is yet to be converted to God. They are the truths which warmed and elevated and ennobled the hearts of our fathers in generations past, and on which they pillowed their heads, when they laid themselves down to breathe out their

spirits in death. They are the truths by which we hope our souls will be raised to heaven. In the wisdom of God, he has established an order of men whose business it is to teach these truths to others, and apply them to the character and condition of men, in each successive age ; to take them from the inanimate page, and warm them in their own hearts, and animate them with their own spirit, and present them in living strength and beauty. But even in this simple business, there are peculiar difficulties to be encountered. The power of communicating thought from mind to mind, wonderful though it be, is at best but imperfect. Words and looks and tones and gestures do not always convey to another precisely the thought of him that speaks. They may, unhappily, sometimes seem to convey a thought, which the very man that uses them would be the first to disapprove. The medium of communication often fails us ; and especially him who addresses men frequently, and at stated periods, and often, as he must of necessity, when crowded with duties, and his mind has not time to think deliberately and definitely and select with care the forms of expression,—when disease or weariness oppresses his spirits, or when from the character of his subject he must rely much on the previous knowledge of his hearers, or is obliged, for the same reason, to use language according to its less common signification. And it were certainly unreasonable to expect that his intellectual faculties will be always equally clear and vigorous ; as if he were like some well-tuned instrument, that needs only to be touched, and it will at any time send forth the desired music. The mind of the hearer is not always in a state equally favorable to perceive the truth ; and it is not impossible that the indulgence of inordinate appetite may sometimes, in

his view, give to truth itself the appearance of deformity and falsehood. Both he who speaks and they who hear, will always have occasion for mutual candor and kindness ; and happy would it be, if he might always rise to address them with the spirit of our text : " Yea, and if I be offered on the sacrifice of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all ;" and with full confidence that their hearts respond to the sentiment that follows ; " For the same cause do ye also joy and rejoice with me."

Among the people to be addressed, there is a great diversity of character. The learned and the ignorant, the strong-minded and the weak, the refined and the uncultivated, the high and the low, the old and the young, the rich and the poor, meet together. The Lord is the maker of them all, and they have all occasion to bow before him in acts of devotion, and to attend to the instructions and admonitions of his word. They have all need to be addressed in a manner somewhat adapted to their respective characters and several capacities. That which would be tame and feeble and unedifying to some, may be just level to the apprehension of their feeble neighbors ; while that which refreshes those may be chilling or unintelligible to these. The scribe must be well instructed indeed, who shall give to every one his *due* portion in his due season. There are also the timid and desponding to be encouraged ; and the bold and hardened and inconsiderate to be alarmed and persuaded, if possible, by the terrors of the Lord. The gay and the thoughtless are to be won to consideration, that they may think for a moment of their latter end. The careless in sin are to be awakened to a just consciousness of their guilt ; hope is to be lighted up before the mind that is

shut in with the gathering clouds of moral wretchedness ; and the broken-hearted penitent is to be led gently to him who giveth the weary and the heavy laden rest. The mourner is to be comforted, the feeble disciple is to be upheld, the back-sliding Christian is to be admonished and restored, the faithful strengthened in their fidelity, and the aged pilgrim advancing near to heaven, is to be invigorated with expanding, brightening prospects of the promised land. While, with his strongest efforts to instruct those who are already well instructed, and to help those who are already strong in the faith, and to soften those who have long been hardening in sin, he may not overlook the multitude of little ones, who are just blooming into life, blooming every where among the assembly, and who are to live and grow with the oldest for ever ; nor forget the parting words of his Master to the most zealous disciple, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Feed my lambs."

The simple and hallowed ordinances of our religion require also of him who administers, and of those who receive them, the same spirit of mutual kindness and confidence, when he gathers the professing believers around his Master's table, to break for them the bread, and pour for them the wine, which are emblems of the body that was broken, and of the blood that was poured forth for the redemption of their souls ; and when he sprinkles their infant children with the baptismal water, and consecrates them to their parents' God, the Father, and the Son, and Holy Ghost.

But if the spirit of the text be important in these public services, it is not less so in more private and personal intercourse. The gospel is the friend and comforter of all, and requires that he who dispenses it should likewise be the friend

and comforter of all ; and they who would receive its benefits, can receive them only with a corresponding good-will. In their personal intercourse, the pastor is made, to some extent, the confidant of all. He is expected to listen patiently to the tale of sorrow, from which others might turn away with indifference or disgust. His bosom is to be the ever ready receptacle of all the griefs and grievances of which the many discomforted ones around him would at any time disburden themselves. Those who are anxious and oppressed, through the consciousness of sin and danger, expect from him, in their efforts to throw off their load, that help which he cannot give, unless they disclose to him, on this subject, the secret and most sacred thoughts of their hearts.

The true disciples of Christ expect of him encouragement in fighting the good fight of faith, and require his assistance in relieving them of spiritual difficulties that cannot well be removed, till they are first freely exposed. He must be accessible to all, —of every character, of every rank, and of every station ; and must meet them all, as opportunity allows or occasion demands, in their own homes, and often in scenes the most tender, and where forms and ceremonies and common restraints are thrown off, and, perhaps, sometimes even where common prudence is forgotten. He must sit by the bedside of sickness and distress, and pour consolation into the ear of the dying Christian, and gently but faithfully admonish the unrepenting, unbelieving sinner, and persuade him to be quickly reconciled to his Father and his judge. He must mingle in the mourning group, and point the mourner away from him that is dead, to him that never dieth. He must utter their desires and express their wants in prayer to God. And when health and prosperity



animate them with joy, which they cannot and need not suppress, he may not repel them with austerity, or coldly refuse to smile with them, and be pleased because they are pleased. For he must both weep with those who weep, and rejoice with those who rejoice. And such intercourse cannot be sustained, it cannot be profitable, it cannot effect its proper design, where a spirit of mutual distrust, of dislike, or of indifference prevails. Nay, it cannot be supported by the mere feelings of common civility.

The relation of pastor and people is, throughout, peculiar and delicate. Its duties cannot be performed in the same spirit as the ordinary duties of life. We may labor successfully to promote the health or defend the property of the man for whom we have no feelings of kind regard. We may supply him with the requisite means of subsistence, and with the common comforts of living. We may, perhaps, though less successfully, instruct and educate the mind of the pupil in whom we have no affectionate interest; but we can never benefit the heart, unless our own heart freely and generously go with us in our efforts. We may derive important assistance, in our secular affairs, from men in whom we have no confidence, and whose character we thoroughly despise; but we cannot admit them into our heart, either to comfort or to improve it. We can receive from them no gift which we would willingly place within our breast; the choicest spiritual boon seems contaminated by their touch.

We cannot be too sensible of the delicacy and importance of that relation which has now been formed, and which the solemnities of the past week have sanctioned, between you, my much respected and beloved people, and him who is per-

mitted to-day, for the first time, to address you as your pastor and minister. Without referring to the sacredness and proper dignity of the pastoral office, whose powers and duties cannot be precisely defined, and whose influence is chiefly moral,—or to the nature of those sublime truths with which we must be conversant, but which are above and beyond the entire comprehension of any finite mind,—or to the difficulty of always communicating our thoughts with clearness and precision to the mind of another, even on the most simple and familiar subjects, and especially where there is not opportunity for question and answer,—or to the great variety of taste and character to be found among a people so numerous,—it is enough that we keep in mind, that our relation is between heart and heart, and our intercourse that which respects the devout and tenderest feelings, the hopes and fears, the joys and sorrows of moral and immortal souls. It is a relation that may be easily marred, if it be not broken; like the softest, sweetest music, a single jar may destroy its power, and turn its pure pleasures into pains and disgust.

We can easily spoil our influence on the moral feelings and character of others, and as easily shut up our own hearts from all the benefit which they would gladly bestow. A single incautious remark of a father, though in itself, perhaps, and when properly understood, perfectly just, may pervert the effect of an entire discourse upon the mind of his child, and a similar remark, as he passes along on his homeward way from the house of God, may disperse the meditations and drive for ever from the mind of his neighbor, the same thoughts that were gathering in upon him for the salvation of his soul. And a frequent repetition of such remarks, and the indulgence of the

feelings they excite, will secretly, and slowly, perhaps, but certainly, work an effect on his own mind, and the mind of his child and his neighbor, that will defy the powers of him who has been the subject of them to remove it, or place by the side of it any thing that is good. But, brethren, I need not say, that I hope better things of you, though I thus speak. It is my happiness to believe, that throughout this assembly there is not a heart that is locked up with prejudice, nor within these spacious walls a heart that now beats heavily with emotions of unkindness and distrust. I cannot assure you that I shall always so live and speak and act, as to deserve your favor. But it is the desire of my heart,—it is my prayer that I may. I do not ask you to blind yourselves to my faults and defects, for I have both,—and both are too palpable not to be seen. Nor could I desire, if I might expect it, an overweening fondness, that would miscall those faults virtues, and those defects excellences. But I may ask you, for your own sake, and for your children's sake, to be indulgent towards me, and remember, that to err is human. I could not be so disrespectful as to suppose you capable of willing flattery, and therefore I may not presume to warn you against it. Your admiration and applause, if it were possible for it to be excited, would certainly do me harm. They who, in the enthusiasm of excited feeling, are sometimes so profuse and extravagant in their applause of him who serves their faith, little know what a thrust it is to the sensibilities of his heart, to what temptations it exposes him, nor what an injury it is both to his character and to theirs, in the estimation of all the impartial and judicious. Your censure I certainly deprecate. Let me have your approbation, your confidence and your sympathy, and

the consciousness that I am doing you good, and it is all that I ask. I shall be satisfied,—nay more, I shall be happy. It will be my pleasure to live and labor and pray, and if God so please, to die for you : “ Yea, and if I be offered on the sacrifice and service of your faith, to joy and rejoice with you all.”

I may not forget that I stand in a peculiarly sacred place, quite privileged beyond the common walks of men. We are gathered within walls and beneath a roof made venerable for years, and sacred by many hallowed scenes. The tear of penitence has often flowed, and the prayer of faith often been breathed, by sainted ones who leaned their heads where you now recline yours in the same attitude of devotion. And before these walls arose, and this revered temple lifted its spire towards heaven, the place where it stands had become a consecrated spot, and here were gathered then and since a noble company of believers, who have left the savor of their names, and around whose memory we love to linger. Here the devout and learned Thatcher first lifted his zealous, glowing prayers to heaven, and prayed, I doubt not, for us as well as for those around him, and those who are yet to take our place. Here the profound Willard taught the great principles of truth, and reasoned of the deep things of God : and the accomplished Pemberton elegantly displayed their beauty and their glory. Here the patriarchal Sewall tenderly exhorted, and the erudite Pierce instructed a thronging multitude in the day of bright prosperity, and loved as brothers, and prayed and labored together in heavenly harmony. Cumming shone out as a star, and quickly melted away into the light of heaven, —and Hunt, in the freshness and beauty of his genius, came

forth as an angel of love, and hastened to join his predecessors on high. Here, too, Blair and Bacon left their testimony that it is only by mutual confidence and sympathy that pastor and people can be together blest. The venerated Eckley, too, here repaired the desolations of Zion, and gathered back the flock that had been scattered by the fierce blast of war, and the amiable, the prudent, the reproachless Huntington, stood with him, as a son with a father, and still stood for a little while in his place when the father was gone, and warn sinners to Christ. And, from the same hallowed desk, another has but recently gone down to stand foremost among those, who are sending the same gospel, which has here been so long preached and rejoiced in, around the globe. He still lingers among us, and has been permitted to lay his hand on the head of a successor, and consecrate him to stand here and labor in his stead. But the spirits of the holy ones who have gone before ! Have they not been with us also ? If there is joy in heaven among the angels, when a single sinner on earth repenteth, have the redeemed no knowledge of it that they may participate in the joy ? Have those who rose from this spot no knowledge of us ? Methinks they are gazing upon us now. Hark ! they call to us ! Sons, children, forget not your fathers, and forsake not your fathers' God. Hold sacred the inheritance we gave you, and be faithful to yourselves, to your children and to your trust ! Yes, ye sainted ones, we do remember you, and your God is our God even unto death ! We will hold sacred the inheritance you bequeathed us ! " If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning : let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I do not prefer thee above my chief joy."

What may be the design of Providence in leading you now to the united choice of one encompassed with infirmities, we know not. It is yet to be disclosed. God grant it may not be for a mutual chastisement, but for a blessing to me and to you. I come to you in weakness and in fear and much trembling. It is only some humble trust in him, the joy of whom may be made my strength, and a full confidence in your candor and kindness, that now sustains me. With this I give myself, mind and heart to the work. It only remains that I ask your constant prayers. When you go into the retirement of your closet, to commune alone with God, when you gather your families around your family altar, and when you take your children aside to teach them to pray, let there be one petition for him who has been consecrated to serve your faith. Pray for him, that his own faith may not fail. Pray that he may have heart and mind and strength to serve you effectually. Pray that he may not falter and languish and faint, and turn from the work, as it would seem that he must; but *rather* than *this*, that life and usefulness might terminate together; that if he must fall, he may fall at once in the midst of the service, with the robes of the temple still wrapped about him, like a good soldier of the cross, still fighting the good fight, firm and faithful to the last, and go up all armored and nerved from the combat. Pray that you all may be gathered with him in peace unto God; and when we stand on the mount above, may we be permitted to gather together, beneath those trees, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations, and by the river of God which flows from his throne, and talk together of this day, and once in commemoration of it, sing together the new song. With such bright hopes, and a heart to help each

on to heaven, let the ministry which begins to-day, begin, continue, and end. "Yea, and if I be offered on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all. For the same cause, also, do ye joy and rejoice with me."

## SERMON III.

IN THE WORLD YE SHALL HAVE TRIBULATION —JOHN 16: 33.

WHEN our Saviour gathered his chosen disciples around him, just before his crucifixion, to speak to them words of comfort, and to give them a testimony, that "having loved his own, he loved them unto the end," he did not conceal or disguise the fact, that in the world they must suffer trials and afflictions. He told them, he would not leave them comfortless, and bade them be of good cheer, and love one another, and keep his commandments; and promised them he would come again and receive them unto himself; but he offered them no consolations from the world, and gave them no assurances of happiness in the present life. "Let not your heart be troubled," said he; "in my Father's house are many mansions; I go to prepare a place for you. It is expedient for you, that I go away. Ye now, therefore, have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your hearts shall rejoice. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation."

Nothing can exempt men from suffering so long as they remain in the flesh. Neither the faith of the righteous, nor the fearlessness of the wicked, can secure them unmingled



pleasures, or protect them against repeated ills. The charming scenes of earthly good, which the young, the spirited and the sanguine are continually forming in their imaginations of the future, may, at best, but amuse them with some faint idea of what this world might have been, if man had not sinned, and the earth had not been subjected to a curse. They have now no reality here. They deceive men while they allure, encourage but to open upon them disappointment, and engage their affections but to divert them from the only objects that bring permanent peace.

It may, perhaps, compose our minds to a better enjoyment of the comforts which this world does afford, and give us a healthier taste for the joys of another, as well as prepare us to meet with firmness and serenity our appointed troubles, to contemplate some of the sources, and the unfailing certainty of human suffering.

The very earth itself, from which we were formed, and by whose productions we are fed and clothed, is doomed to occasion us much disquietude. It is no longer a proper dwelling-place for happy spirits. It is fit only to be the temporary residence of beings, who need to be alternately cheered and chastised. Could our first parents now return to it, with all the innocence and buoyancy and nobleness of soul which they had, when they first became conscious of their existence, they would not find here the paradise which they lost. Its walls have long since been broken down,—its luxuriant plants have withered and decayed,—its fresh valleys and flowery fields and fruitful hills have all been laid waste, and the soft, mild air, in which they breathed fragrance and perpetual health, has been broken up with fitful winds and raging

storms. There is here no resting-place even for such beings as they. Instead of a garden of Eden, requiring, to dress and to keep it, only just that labor which is itself a recreation, while surrounded with every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, they would behold one wide and comparatively barren surface, over which the blighting curse of God has passed, and left only some poor resemblances of what it should have been.

The earth is now condemned to bring forth thorns and thistles. It does not, as in those happy days, produce its wholesome fruits spontaneously, with a richness and variety that invites man to indulge every appetite, and gratify every desire, without solicitude and without restraint. He must labor with constant and painful industry, and spend long days of toil and exposure, in order to procure for himself and his own a comfortable subsistence. "In the sweat of his face must he eat bread until he return to the ground." Even the few whom rare circumstances may load with wealth without their own exertion, must suffer a burthen, and often be perplexed with embarrassment to manage and preserve it. They are encumbered with cares and urged with wants that will not permit them to rest. For in sorrow, they, too, must eat of the fruits of the earth all the days of their life. While it is the common lot of all to endure the extremes of heat and cold,—now melting beneath a burning sun, and now shivering before the northern blast ;—or else in their home of earthquake and whirlwind, always drooping under the influence of a torrid sky ; or, still worse, shrinking in torpor among polar mountains of everlasting ice. Men must clothe and shelter themselves with toilsome care, to preserve their own existence, and

protect themselves from the noxious powers of the very air that surrounds them ; damps and chills, or sultry heats, will still annoy them. The winds of heaven bring discomfort, and the murky vapors spread gloom and depression. Is this, then, the abode of delight ? Does it indicate that its inhabitants shall have ease and enjoyment ? Does it appear to have been designed for beings who may expect uninterrupted repose ? Was it intended that men should seek for happiness in such a place as this ? O, no ! We do not here find ourselves ushered into a palace, whose splendor and garniture and rich stores tell us of nothing but luxury, amusement and rest. On every part of this broad dwelling-place of man, you may see inscribed, as with glowing characters, " In the world ye shall have tribulation."

Our own physical constitution, also, seems pledged to give us uneasiness. These bodies are too feeble to sustain themselves in constant health, or to be often at ease. They are too frail even to endure the high degree of pleasure of which they are susceptible. In their most exquisite enjoyments, if long continued or often renewed, they do but suffer a kind of pleasurable violence. They exhaust their own strength, and lavish a part of themselves, in that very excitement that gives to life its most fascinating charms ; like those birds, whose sweetest music is said to indicate that they are soon to expire ; or like materials of combustion, which shine brightest only when they are consuming fastest. Our appetites must, therefore, be continually restrained, and our passions subjected to a constant and rigid discipline, to prevent them from ultimately giving us greater pain than all the comfort they can afford. We must ever, then, be disquieted with ever-recurring infirmities, and be

not proof against the blight of calumny,—the most generous and self-denying offices of kindness will not secure you a return of gratitude,—your present conduct is liable to misconstruction and abuse. The very men whom you have most befriended will, not unfrequently, betray the confidence you reposed in them. Your most unaffected and open-hearted civilities will sometimes expose you to secret and future derision. There are not wanting those in almost every neighborhood, who will catch the imperfect sentences, as they fall unqualified and unfinished from your lips, and hie away to report them, with many exaggerations, where they will give the greatest annoyance, and do the most harm. There are those, whose eyes sparkle at the tale of slander, whose countenances beam with animation; whose hearts exult as with a great discovery, at the rehearsal of some new and fictitious story that marks you with reproach. There are those who will gather up your faults with as much eagerness as a beggar would your last coin, that they may purchase, by the exposure of them, the favor of those who love you not.

In the business, moreover, of every day, you are often exposed to disappointment, mortification, embarrassment and perplexity, by the mistakes or unfaithfulness, and perverseness of those whom you employ, or with whom you are concerned: Your best plans, and your fairest schemes for the improvement of your condition and the promotion of your interests, are continually liable to be interrupted and destroyed by the failure of those on whom you must in some measure depend for their execution. Your purposes for the advancement of the general good may be thwarted by the selfishness, the narrow policy, and unyielding wilfulness of those who must accede to your

designs before they can be accomplished. Your own private property must be guarded with pledges and obligations, and be superintended with unceasing vigilance ; you must watch while you wake, and bar your doors while you sleep, to protect yourself against being wronged in some of your rights or possessions. There can be no permanent and satisfying peace in such a world as this. Verily, God has not placed you among such beings as these, that you might here *enjoy yourself*. You must not look for happiness here.

I have not spoken now particularly of the depravity of your own hearts, that would not suffer you to be perfectly at rest even among the holiest and best. I pass over the full consideration of those personal faults, that so often expose you to the censures and reproaches and taunts of those who are at least as faulty as yourself ; and purposely omit the frequent sins that cover you with shame, or wring your hearts with regret, and cause you to weep in secret places. Most of the evils to which I have referred, might befall you, though you were as pure as the unblemished seraph. If the holiest angel that bows before God's throne rejoicing, were to come from heaven to earth, all radiant with benevolence and dignity, and dwell among men, he would not escape their envy, their insult and abuse. We know he would not. For one greater and better than the holiest angel did once come from heaven to earth and dwelt among men ; and him they derided, slandered, insulted, *crucified*.

But there is still another unavoidable source of suffering, arising from our connection with mankind. Although our race is so depraved, we are by no means alienated from each other's society. We are constituted social beings. We are made

mutually dependent, and are bound to each other, in the relation of family and friendship, by the tenderest sympathies. No man can live in comfort by himself alone. If there be one who is strangely destitute of natural affection, whose heart is never moved and warmed with a fellow feeling towards his kind, and who knows nothing of the soft emotions that kindred and friends inspire, I need not prove to you that his bosom was never made for the dwelling-place of a peaceful spirit. I need not tell you that there is no happiness there. He who is destitute of endeared relatives and friends, or the feelings which these naturally excite, must be very destitute of human enjoyment ; and he who has them is sure to suffer on their account. We are so constituted and connected, that the source of our sweetest pleasures must produce some of our keenest sorrows. All the various ills to which we are liable as individuals, are redoubled and multiplied upon us, by the sufferings of those to whom we are allied ; we feel the same pangs which are endured by them ; we are disgraced by the same causes which bring shame upon them ; the evils that suffuse their eyes with tears will not permit ours to be dry. The anguish of one shades a whole household in gloom.

To a truly pious man, the irreligious character, and fearful condition of his *unconverted* friends must be a ceaseless cause of anxiety and grief. He alone can tell how distressing is that anxiety, and how tender and deep felt is that grief. He alone can tell what heaviness oppresses that soul who has been seeking for years, in doubtful expectation, the salvation of beloved relatives and associates, and has done all that strong solicitude could devise, or warm affection urge, and still finds them hard-hearted, unyielding, and reckless as before.

The palpable faults, too, of which, as depraved beings, they may sometimes be guilty, must give you disquietude. It is sad indeed, when you would embrace your friend with a warm and open heart, and throw around him the best affections of your souls, to discover upon him some moral blemish, that mars all his beauty and fills you with disgust. The bitterest tears that ever a parent shed have fallen over a child's iniquity, which no tears could wash away, and which even a parent's fondness could not conceal. The sorest wound that has ever been made upon a mother's heart, has been inflicted there by the wickedness of her own offspring. And how rare is the parent, the brother, or the sister, who has not, at some time, known what it is to be grieved by the misconduct of those whom they had loved the most.

But if we were spared this misery, there is another, which none who live long in this world can escape. The tenderest ties must be severed, the dearest connection be broken up, and the object to which we were most closely attached be torn from our bleeding hearts. The mother may clasp her pale infant to her breast with convulsive force, and bathe it with all her flowing tears, but cannot defend it against the stroke of death. His purpose will never be deferred because friends cannot bear to part. The decree of Heaven, "Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return," cannot be averted because these throng around the dying bed with weeping and lamentation. Friends must be separated. They who have loved most sincerely must suffer corresponding wo. You must first yield yourselves to the king of terrors, or gaze on while he smites the object of your fondest regard. Parents, husbands, wives, children, you all must, ere-long, be told that these whom

you now love and rejoice in are dead. The happiest fire-side must soon mourn because one who now encircles it with you in joy is not there. Your hearts must be wrung with repeated anguish, till all with whom you could enjoy the pleasures of the world are taken away, or you are confined in silence to the dark and narrow tomb.

If there were nothing else to interrupt the enjoyments of this world, and tell us of tribulation here, it were enough that the sigh of bereavement is so often heard. What lasting happiness can we expect in a world where those, who confer it in the highest degree, are continually sickening and dying in our embrace! The Saviour himself was constrained to weep, when Lazarus his friend was dead.

These causes of suffering, which are all unavoidable, are more or less increased by the fearful uncertainty that hangs over every thing here. It is a part of the determination of God in respect to this fallen world, that we shall not know what a day or an hour may bring forth. There are no certain principles by which we may determine when or how we shall be afflicted. We only know that to maintain this uncertainty, the brightest prospects must sometimes be overclouded, the healthiest must be smitten with disease, and the most useful as well as the most worthless must be taken from our society. It is absolutely essential to that uncertainty in which God has purposed to shroud the world, that his providences should be often mysterious, and his ways unaccountable. A dark pall must be stretched out over the earth, obscuring it in doubtfulness and gloom. We must be disquieted with incessant and varying apprehensions of approaching evils; or if, at any time, we are permitted for a season to settle in quietness, and indulge



ourselves in free anticipations of coming good, we must be soon aroused, as we almost always are, by some unexpected event, that tells us there is no rest for us here. "In the world ye shall have tribulation."

It is worthy of special notice, in relation to our subject, that the Bible, which is wisely adapted to the wants of man, seems to be every where framed upon this supposition. It is filled with *consolations*. It presupposes the existence of human suffering. It would be, to a great extent, a useless book, if it found here a race of happy beings. It was evidently designed for the poor, the afflicted and sorrowful. From the beginning to the end, it utters a voice of comfort for those who mourn. It speaks to us in mild tones, and tells us of another and a better world. It comes to us as a kind physician, to soothe our pains, and bind up our aching hearts. It anticipates in its whole character, that man will always need to be consoled.

And if any thing is to be learned from the history of the past, we may add, moreover, that man always has needed to be consoled. The tears of our first parents, who went weeping out of the garden of Eden, had scarcely ceased to flow for the loss of Paradise, ere their first-born son sunk them in deepest mourning, by imbruing his hands in his brother's blood. Their children have never lost the inheritance of their woes. The patriarch Jacob, who had been driven from home by a brother's revenge, when returning with the accumulated wealth of long absent years, and the blessing of a numerous family, was obliged to lay down his beloved Rachel in the grave by the way, and to enter again his father's house, as one that mourned. Next he laments the loss of a favorite son, and refuses to be comforted ; and then he is soon to die, with the

declaration trembling on his tongue, "Evil and few have the days of the years of my life been." The devout and exalted Psalmist sings in plaintive strains, "Mine eye mourneth by reason of afflictions." The wise, the rich, the prosperous Solomon looks around on his riches, his pleasures, and his greatness, and is made to exclaim, as in disgust, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity and vexation of spirit." The prophet melts into sorrow, and cries out in touching lamentation, "Verily I am the man that hath seen affliction." Paul, the high-minded, devoted Paul, bore continually a thorn in his flesh, which no prayers or entreaties could remove. And are we wiser or better than they, that we should expect to be exempt from the sufferings that afflicted them? Have we more piety than David, more wisdom than Solomon, or more faith and devotedness than Paul? The biographies of the most eminent men who have lived since these went to their rest, give us a detail of suffering from which the youthful mind would shrink, and testify with one united voice, that the God, who afflicted the patriarchs and prophets and apostles, has not ceased to discipline his own. And shall we presumptuously expect that the course of nature will be changed, or the government of the world altered, because we have taken our turn of existence in it? If there is any instruction to be derived from the past, it is full and explicit, that a life of trial, of disappointment and endurance is now opening before us.

Such, in short, is the express declaration of God. His word has gone forth. It is firm as his throne. It is unalterable as his character. He hath *promised* afflictions even to the holiest and best. "As many as I love," saith he, "I rebuke and chasten." "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourge-

eth every son whom he receiveth." "For we must," says the apostle, "through great tribulation enter into the kingdom of heaven." And the kind, affectionate Jesus, in the last interview which he had with his beloved disciples before he died on the cross, finished his tender address to them, with the assurance,—“In the world ye shall have tribulation.”

It is not more certain, therefore, that the rivers will continue to flow into the sea, or that summer and winter, seed time and harvest shall not cease, than that the inhabitants of the earth shall suffer and mourn. It is easy, indeed, for fancy to collect all the good things of the world into one smiling group, and to form for herself a paradise of her own. We may easily charm ourselves with these imaginary scenes, and then look round in a kind of proud superiority over the multiplied ills of mankind, and wonder at the supposed follies, mistakes, want of caution, or singular mishaps which have made them all so far from being happy. We may easily flatter ourselves that *we* shall avoid all their errors, exercise a much wiser discretion, escape their misfortunes, and live easily and gloriously where others have toiled and endured. We may paint for ourselves a beautiful picture of human life, and viewing it with delight, see no reason why we may not, before long, enjoy all that it promises; but the reality soon comes, and the picture puts us to shame. Let us not depreciate the real comforts of life; for they are many, and bestowed by a kind hand; ingratitude is perhaps among our most heinous sins; we ought not,—it is base, to be always complaining of the miseries of this world. It is well adapted to the purpose for which it was given us. But the truth is, that since man fell, it has not been designed for his home. With all its transient joys, it is yet thick set

with immovable causes of wo. God has determined that "in the world ye shall have tribulation."

The afflictions of men may be various, both in kind and degree. It has not been intended to enumerate all, or to select the worst sources of trouble, but merely to notice some that are unavoidable ; to fix in our minds the absolute certainty of sufferings while on earth, that we may be prepared to meet them without murmuring and without discouragement, and look beyond them to higher and brighter scenes.

Young men ! the subject addresses itself especially to you. In the life that is before you, you may find many pleasures ; but be sure you must endure much discomfort and pain. There is here no rest for you. The scenes of fancied bliss are continually flying before you as you advance. Your pursuit of them is like chasing the sun over the western hills, while it is ever receding and sinking before you as you go. The very winds of heaven, the storms and tempests, the droughts and damps, all proclaim that here is no abode of delight. The pains you have already felt in your frames, admonish you that though health may now be blooming on your cheeks, the poison of death is lurking within. Diseases must wilt you down, sickness must cause you to faint, distress writhes every limb. The depravity of men will not be more favorable to your peace, than it has been to the peace of those who have lived before you. Their selfishness and envy and intrigues and churlishness will sometimes disturb you, and mar all your joys ;—while the friends who have soothed and cheered you, will successively fall and die by your side, and leave you as one that wanders in a bleak world alone. A dark uncertainty will ever hang over your path ; and soon, very soon, if life is till then pro-

longed, you will be seen with trembling limbs and faltering tongue, lamenting, like the patriarch, " Evil and few have the days of the years of my life been." Methinks a voice of one who is unseen, speaks to you to-day,—“ Children, build not your hopes on the earth. You are but young pilgrims here. Yonder is your home. Seek first of all the kingdom of heaven. Lay up for yourselves treasures there.”

Men of suffering, of disappointment and sorrow ! the subject has also a word for you. Think it not strange, as though some strange thing had happened unto you, that afflictions are now your portion ? Could you expect exemption from them here ? Did not your heavenly Father tell you, that “ in the world ye shall have tribulation ?” He is now only fulfilling his word,—he is proving that his promises are all true. Complain not of his faithfulness ; murmur not at his truth. Remember that the same hand, which has stricken you, is also pledged to give relief to those who confide in him. The same God who hath said, “ As many as I love I rebuke and chasten,” hath also said, “ I will never leave nor forsake you.” If ye were without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, God would not deal with you as with children. There is a blessing in your present sorrows. The more grievous are your trials now, the richer may be your joys hereafter ; the harder are your toils, the brighter may be your crown ; the more irksome your task, the sweeter will be your repose. John, in his revelation, represents the most conspicuous, the most honored, and the most happy in heaven, as those who have been the greatest sufferers in the world. For when, in the midst of those scenes he was exalted to view, it was asked by one of the elders before the throne, “ Who are these that are arrayed in

white robes, and whence came they?"—he heard it replied, "These are they who have *come out of great tribulation*, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." You may soon stand among them. You may now be preparing in sadness to join that princely band,—pure as the purest,—peaceful as the most blest. Droop not then under the burthen that is upon you,—faint not when thou art rebuked,—linger not in mournfulness here. Awake! Arise from the dust, and gird yourselves for the way. Move steadily on to your rest.

Fellow-sufferers in a world of tribulation! let us learn to fasten our hopes on the skies,—be grateful for the comforts that are scattered along our path,—wait patiently all the days of our appointed time till our change come,—and reckon, with the heaven-aspiring apostle, that "the sufferings of this present life are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed."

## SERMON IV.\*

**BUT BE OF GOOD CHEER; I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD.—JOHN 16: 33.**

LITTLE did we anticipate, when last I was permitted to address you in this sacred place, and was discoursing to you from the words which immediately precede the text, that we should so soon, and to such an extent, be made to realize their import, in our own personal experience. As I look back to that hour, it seems as if a prophetic inspiration had prompted me then to repeat to you the declaration of our Saviour in his farewell address to his disciples,—and to dwell upon the sentiment: “In the world ye shall have tribulation.” And now, that, after so long a time of separation and painful suspense, I come to address you once more, and for the last time as your pastor, my mind involuntarily fastens upon the words that follow: “But be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”

We may not expect, that we shall ever be entirely free from causes of disquietude, or secure against repeated disappointments, while we live in the world. Neither the apparent constitution of the world, nor its history, nor the united testimony of mankind, nor our own experience, nor the express declarations of God, will allow us in such anticipations. We may not, in the day of adversity, presume to look forward for coming scenes of satisfying prosperity, which will make us

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\* For explanation, see Preface, also 68th page of Life and Character.

recompense for the sufferings of the past. If we seek for consolation in the things of this life, they will certainly fail us. If at any time we should seem, at last, to have gained the desired condition, it will soon prove delusive, or be to us as the ghostly harbinger of some swift-coming calamity. "It hath long been my observation of many," said the experienced Baxter, "that when they have attempted great works and have just finished them ; or have aimed at great things in the world, and have just obtained them ; or have lived in much trouble, and have just overcome it ; and begin to look on their condition with content, and rest in it ; they are then usually near to death or ruin." The Saviour did not permit his disciples to hope for satisfactory enjoyment of the pleasures or the comforts of the world ; but, as he led them through scenes of mingled joy and sorrow, he pointed them onward, and bade them look above and beyond the world, and in the midst of tribulation, still to "be of good cheer."

Instead, therefore, of dwelling in sadness upon our disappointments and afflictions, and of adding unnecessary gloom to this parting hour, or of cheating our souls with vain imaginations of future success, I am desirous rather of improving this occasion to elevate your minds and my own, above the fallacious pleasures of earth, to those joys which are satisfying and eternal. Instead of using the circumstances of our present condition to produce a feverish excitement, or of wantonly playing upon each other's sensibilities, I would give such a direction to the train of our thoughts, and so turn the current of our emotions, as will make our hearts permanently better and happier. I would open before us the prospect of those scenes, which lie beyond the present life, and on which we



are commanded to look with cheerfulness and hope. To the unbeliever I can, indeed, promise nothing that will give satisfaction. His prospect must necessarily be bounded by the narrow limits of the world. All beyond is impervious to his eye. Death is coming to him enveloped in clouds. Darkness hangs over and around his tomb; and doubt, appalling doubt, like some fiend of despair, stands within the door of his sepulchre. The man who professes to receive the revelations of God as true, but still indulges himself in sinful gratifications, and cannot be persuaded to repent, and does not yield his heart in love to him who made him, and to him who died to redeem him, will perhaps derive scarcely any greater consolations from the visions of eternity. Fear may agitate his breast, and distort the objects of his sight, as he gazes in upon the land where spirits dwell. He knows that the current of his soul must be changed, or he can find no home, no happiness there. The pleasures of earth are the sweetest that have ever met his taste; they are all that he dares with confidence to expect. When worn with the cares, and wearied with the toils, and heart-sick with the disappointments of the world, he looks not to heaven as the sure resting-place of his soul, he looks not to the grave as the bed of repose; but shudders to think, that when overcome at last by the burdens of the day, he may lie down to a restless, feverish night,—a long, fearful night, without any star, and without any dawn. But the sincere disciple of Jesus, every one who is willing to confide in a Redeemer's love, and, by patient continuance in ways of well-doing, seeks for glory, honor and immortality, cannot fail to be consoled, refreshed, and made better, in the saddest hour, by the prospect which reason and revelation unitedly unfold to

his mind. Sweet fields, delightful views to the eye of faith, stretch far away into the eternal distance beyond the world. The Saviour has already passed through the darkness of the intervening valley of death, and illumined the path ; and from the bright region beyond, a well known voice is heard, " Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

I. Let us observe, then, in the first place, that when the Christian, like his Master, has overcome the world, he will live in another and pleasanter place. But as I hope I am a Christian, and standing in the midst of an assembly composed chiefly of Christians, or of those who, I trust, will become such, may I not, for once at least, without fear of misapprehension, indulge my feelings with more freedom, and changing the abstract form of my proposition, bring home its promise to our own hearts, and say to you, my friends, when we, like our Master, have overcome the world, we shall live in another and pleasanter place.

We shall still live. It is in the constitution of our nature to expect it. We are formed to presume on continued and unending existence. In every age and in every clime, if his mind were so far developed as to be conscious of his superiority to the brutes, man has always been unwilling to think that he shall ever cease to be. Nothing is so repulsive to his feelings, nothing so opposed to his spontaneous aspirations, nothing to his simple perceptions so absurd, as the idea that he will one day be blotted out of existence, however distant may be the day or moment of such a catastrophe. It is only because conscious guilt has darkened the understanding, and confused its vision, and filled the soul with forebodings of future retribution, that, with much ingenuity and false phi-

losophy, any have attempted to reason down their natural anticipations, and repress their longings after immortality. When we awake to sober and unbiased consideration, and look out upon the earth and sky, the beast and bird,—all unite to convince us that the hope of living for ever, which still springs afresh in every breast, is no delusion. The whole world, which was evidently made for man, bears testimony that he who made it, has not lavished such stores of riches, and put forth such wisdom and skill, merely for a creature of a day. So natural is the expectation of continued life, so much in accordance with all our instinctive anticipations, and our best desires and hopes and aims, and with our simplest reasonings, and the plainest indications of the world around us, that, if sin had not beclouded our mental sight, and mingled fears with our expectations, though we might not be able to demonstrate, that we shall always live, we should not, I think, doubt it, or suffer any uneasiness respecting it. We should presume upon it with as much satisfaction as we presume that the sun which shines to-day, will shine to-morrow. He who came to retrace the inscriptions of nature upon our hearts, and open the light of revelation upon our minds, has removed all uncertainty, and clearly brought life and immortality to light. "Who-soever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. He that believeth in me," says he, "shall never die. My sheep hear my voice — and I give unto them eternal life. The righteous shall go into life eternal." The star of eternal life is bright upon every page of the gospel. There is no longer a shadow of doubt. We shall live for ever. We may smile on the flower of spring, and see it fade and wither beneath our smiles. We may look to the hills, and be admonished that they shall

be plucked away. We may look out upon the broad ocean, rolling majestically from its unmeasured depths, and believe that its waters will be dried up by the hidden fires which are destined to consume the earth. We may lift up our eyes to the sun, shining in splendor as he hath shone since the foundations of the world, and upon the stars glittering in combined grandeur where they have stood since they first gleamed on the eyes of the father of men ; and we may be assured, that this sun shall be darkened, and those stars shall fall. But we retire within ourselves. There is a living, thinking, feeling, moving spirit here, which shall survive them all, and live on, and still live on, immortal as the Spirit who made it.

We shall live in another place. This earth, we are told, shall be burned up ; and before such assurance was given, instinctive nature, almost always true, had proclaimed that our present residence is not the spirit's home. We expect another abode for the blest. If we continue to exist, we must exist some where. None but the infinite Spirit who pervades all space, and lives every where, can exist but in some definite place. Each finite spirit must dwell within his appropriate sphere. The savage looks beyond the "cloud-capt hills ;" the heathen philosopher and poet gaze after an Elysium, framed and fixed by their own reasonings and their own imaginings ; but the Christian looks to heaven. It is a real local habitation, fit for spirits and for spiritual bodies. There our Saviour dwells, clothed in that body which was raised from the dead. There, too, is the venerable patriarch, who "walked with God" on earth, and "had this testimony that he pleased God," and "was translated, that he should not see death." And there is the prophet who ascended on the "chariot of

Israel." It is the place where God so manifests himself, and so displays his glory, that he is said to sit on his throne there. Our Saviour, by precept and example, taught us to look up, and to say, "Our Father, who art in heaven." He "lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father." Just before he disappeared from the world, he said to his disciples, "I go to my Father," and added, "I will come again, and receive *you* to myself." "In my Father's house are many mansions: I go to prepare a place for you." Where that place is, where heaven is, or by what way we may reach it, we know not. It is not revealed. Yet we doubt not; we fear not. We know that if we are true to ourselves, and true to our Master, we shall find it; we shall one day be there. Perhaps some ministering angels may be sent to take this soul on their wings, and bear it home. Or, perhaps, when "the silver cord is loosed" which binds the soul to the body, its own native attractions, unopposed, may draw it to its source, "the dust returning to the earth as it was and the spirit to God who gave it." No longer confined to its house of clay, but lifted by I know not what attractive power, the free spirit, like some returning bird of paradise, will then spread its plumes, and mount upward, higher and higher and higher still, above the sun, above the stars, till it folds its wings and rests its foot by the throne of God.

We shall live in a pleasant place. The same instinctive anticipations, and the same reasonings, which lead us to expect that we shall always live, and live hereafter in some other place than this world, prompt us to regard that place as indescribably pleasant. The savage, the poet, the philosopher, the simplest child of nature, as well as the Christian, all im-

agine their final dwelling-place as “a land of pure delight.” The beauty, the grandeur, the pleasantness of this world does but help us to conceive, and move us to desire, and encourage us to expect for our eternal residence, some other world far more beautiful, more grand, more pleasant. We may not pretend that this world is destitute of charms, that it has nothing worthy of our admiration and love, or nothing which ought to give us pleasure. It is foolish, it is ungrateful, it is usually hypocritical, to speak of it as really undeserving of our regard. They who are most apt to complain of it, are commonly very reluctant to leave it. But if this world, in which there is so much disorder and sin, and which has evidently been smitten with a curse for sin, is still so attractive, so lovely, so admirable, how much more lovely, how pleasant, how glorious must that world be, in which there is no sin and no curse, into which there never entered, and never will enter, any thing that worketh abomination, or maketh a lie! We turn to the sure word of prophecy. The descriptions of heaven which the Bible gives are full of the most glowing imagery. In one place, it is represented as a holy city, a new Jerusalem. The wall of it is jasper,—the city is of pure gold,—the foundations of the wall are garnished with all manner of precious stones,—the gates are pearls,—the streets are pure gold,—there is no need of the sun, neither of the moon; the glory of God lightens it, and the Lamb is the light thereof: there is no night there. There is a pure river of water of life, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. There is the tree of life, bearing twelve fruits, yielding her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. And as the description goes on, adding image to image, and glory

to glory, language cripples under, and we are made to feel that eye hath not seen, nor the heart of man conceived the beauty, the loveliness, the glories of that place which God hath prepared for them that love him.

II. We may observe again, secondly, that when, like our Master, we have overcome the world, we shall still find full employment and pleasant exercise for all our faculties.

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## SERMON V.

A MAN'S HEART DEVISETH HIS WAY ; BUT THE LORD DIRECTETH  
HIS STEPS.—PROVERBS 16: 9.

It is to worship God, and to invoke his blessing, that we are here assembled together. These walls which have been consecrated to his service, proclaim our acknowledged belief of his existence. The prayers we have just now offered, and the praises we have sung, testify that we regard him as not far from any one of us.

It may be well, therefore, to spend a few moments in contemplation of that *providence*, which he exercises over the character and condition of men. "A man's heart deviseth his way ; but the Lord directeth his steps." The deductions of reason, our own observation and experience, the common sense of mankind, and the current language of Scripture unite with this text to teach, that the affairs of men are subject to the watchful and overruling providence of God.

Whether this providence be always exerted directly or indirectly, mediately or immediately, is entirely unimportant to the pious worshipper, and foreign to our present purpose. The advocates for either supposition have here no real ground for dissent. However probable the doctrine of incessant interposition may appear, there is yet no occasion to contend with those who choose to maintain a different or an opposite opinion.



If we were to suppose, that the whole succession of events is only the necessary result of a fixed constitution of nature,—the regular operation of a vast and stupendous machine which God has formed,—we should but more remotely refer it to the same cause. For he who made this machinery, and gave to nature its unerring laws, must have foreseen its various movements, and regulated it with direct reference to the effects which it would hereafter produce. As it respects ourselves, it can be of no practical importance, whether each circumstance of life, each trifling incident that concerns us, is governed by the immediate interposition of our heavenly Father, and moved by his present hand, or whether it results naturally and necessarily from a constitution of things which he wisely and kindly established, in special reference to all that should be, when in the beginning he created the heavens and the earth, and said, “Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven, to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years.” It is enough, that we may discover in the successive changes of the world the controlling power and wisdom of him who made it. It is enough for us, that we may believe there is a providence.

We might infer it, in the first place, as we infer the existence of God, from the appearance of design. The same evidence which tells us there is a God, tells us of his providence. The same marks of design, which are so apparent in the various objects around us, are also discoverable in the changes that attend them, and in the order of events that occur. He who so manifestly formed each tree and bird and insect and plant, that spread their beauties beneath the summer’s sky, as manifestly causes the regular return of summer and winter,

seed-time and harvest. Of what possible use were the curious structure of animals ; what wisdom would be displayed in the wonderful mechanism of those organs, that receive and assimilate their food, and convey its nutriment to every limb ; what nice adaptation of means to an end, on which we are accustomed to dwell so much, would be discernible in these same complex organs, if provision were not made to supply each animal with its appropriate food, in the fresh productions of every year, by a providential management of light and warmth, of air and cloud, of rain and dew ? Let even the winds and the vapors, than which nothing seems more capricious or unaccountable, be left to sport themselves without the control of a presiding Providence, and worthlessness might soon be inscribed upon the ruins of every thing here. Let them be left to linger in indolent stagnation, or cease from their commanded and ever-varying movements, and all those instructive marks of contrivance from which we learn the being of a God would soon be erased from every fowl that flies, every beast that creeps upon the earth, and from man more noble, the lord of them all. The same designing agency, that gave to these creatures their existence, must necessarily be exerted to preserve them. And the same designing agency manifestly is exerted to preserve them. The earth, under the influence of seemingly lawless clouds and sportive breezes, brings forth for each animal his proper food, in its proper season. He finds for himself a plate ever laid at nature's table, loaded with those provisions which are suited to the constitution which nature has given him. The works of creation are not more designedly regular in the conformation of their parts, than in the continual changes that affect them. If

by the one they prove the existence of God, by the other they prove his providence. The revolutions of the earth never fail. The harmony of the spheres is never interrupted. Chance works not with such regularity and adaptedness. It is God who bringeth forth Mazzaroth in his season, and guideth Arcturus and his sons. It is God who feedeth the ravens, and clotheth the lily of the field.

In respect to human affairs, it is true, that we are often confounded and confused, during their progress, in our attempts to interpret their purpose, or to perceive their relations and propriety. Clouds and darkness encircle the Ruler's throne. But in the termination of ages, we often look back with astonishment at the regularity in which these affairs have proceeded ; we admire the wisdom that seems to have directed them. The darkest events become bright with the advance of time, the wildest confusion settles into order, the most trivial occurrences gather importance from their distant effects. The commotions of one people have thrown off their choicest and bravest spirits to form a new, a better, and a happier community. The cupidity and treachery of a ship's commander have conducted the few adventurous founders of a great nation, against their will, to the only spot where the foundation of that nation could have been safely laid. What seemed at first but a causeless, unmeaning and vexatious calamity, is afterwards discovered to be the greatest blessing, which the profoundest wisdom could have secured. And sometimes, on the other hand, an event so peculiar, so simple perhaps in its manner, so trivial in itself, but so important in its connections, and so apt in its occurrence, breaks at once upon the notice of mankind, that all are constrained, without

hesitation, to acknowledge the agency of an invisible hand. A sauntering peasant or two wander into the path of the returning spy, just as his escape is almost sure, and save a great and growing nation from instantaneous destruction. The Christian, the statesman, the warrior, the skeptic, and even the infidel, laying aside for a moment his infidelity, are smitten with one common impression, and all exclaim, "Behold the providence of God!"

But we are, perhaps, even more impressed with this truth, by a consideration of the known character of God. His attributes seem plainly to inculcate it. When we contemplate the being and perfections of him who made the world and all things that are therein, without any attempts to deceive ourselves, or impose upon our credulity and maintain a theory, we fall insensibly into the belief, that he is still present to inspect and to control the works of his hand. We are made to feel, that a Being of such power and wisdom and knowledge and goodness, must have regarded from eternity, and still regards with a paternal eye, all the relations of every object, and every event, binding up the waters in his thick clouds, and gathering the winds in his hand, and leading all his creatures, and feeding them, with as much care and constancy as he led the wandering tribes of Israel, and fed them with manna in the wilderness. We cannot believe, that he, who is so great, so skilful and so condescending as to create this capacious universe, with all it contains, however grand, however minute, has formed any one part of it in the mere feelings of caprice, without regard to its remote and particular effects, and thrown it carelessly from his hands, as a trifling thing. His own nature seems pledged to watch and govern and preserve it.

His knowledge is without any limit. His omniscience must necessarily extend to all, and embrace all. His wisdom, which knows no difficulties, must be adequate, at each instant, to every purpose and every emergency. His power, which never fails, may be exerted without cessation. And his goodness, which is boundless, can never turn away with indifference from any object which his omniscience sees, and whose wants his wisdom can meet, and his power supply. His dignity is surely not too high to notice any thing which it could condescend to make. There is here scarcely any room to reason; we are not left at liberty to doubt; the truth is almost an object of intuition. We cannot doubt the universal and particular providence of God, without limiting his faculties and impairing his perfection.

In perfect accordance with this, is the common sentiment of mankind. Wherever there is found the knowledge of a God, there may be found a belief of his providence. The most ignorant heathen,—in this respect much wiser than some honored sages,—have discovered in the changes of every object, and in every event, the marks of a presiding Deity. They see him in the dawning light of every day, they hear him in every breeze, they witness his movements in every storm. The distorted notions they have formed of his character have not obscured the impressions of his directing agency, which their belief of his being, and the operations of nature are continually making upon them. Their ignorance, combined with the natural depravity of men, has often perverted into superstition the clear perceptions of reason, and filled their imaginations with airy fancies, and their hearts with groundless fears; they see through a misty vision the goings of God,

but have not lost sight of his footsteps. They have changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to four-footed beasts and creeping things; but they have not banished him from his dominions.

Their minds may be too narrow and too much darkened, to form a just conception of one great, indivisible, and pure Spirit, who rules with equity over all; but the manifestations of divine power and presence force themselves so strongly upon their notice, that every fresh fountain and river, every shading tree and thick grove and overhanging rock becomes to them the dwelling-place of a god. And hence it is, that their deities are multiplied, as the objects and occasions that seem to display their agency. The mistaken notions they entertain of so many separate divinities,—of a distinct and appropriate god of war and a god of peace, a god of winds and a god of light, a god of earth and a god of waters, a god of arts, a god of the harvest, a god of hunting, and a god of the fire-side, yea, gods many and lords many, numerous almost as the objects they see, and the wants they feel,—certainly indicate that human nature unsophisticated, is in all these things made to feel Jehovah's presence. The idea of his constant and all-embracing providence seems to be even more perceptible to the mind untaught by revelation, than his oneness and spirituality. Verily, there must be truth in that inscription, which the God of nature has written with such bright and legible characters on all his works.

The same sentiment is also confirmed by our own observation and experience. There is nothing more common, or more true, than the remark, that man is the creature of circumstance.

The condition of most men with whom we are acquainted, has been determined more by a concurrence or succession of circumstances than by any purpose of their own. What is commonly called good fortune or bad fortune is distributed among men with the utmost seeming capriciousness. "Some men are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness forced upon them ;" while others, of perhaps equal or greater merit, spend a life of carefulness and strenuous exertion, and fail after all of their object, and are obliged to content themselves at best with only a humble mediocrity. "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong ; nor yet bread to the wise, nor riches to men of understanding." There are some, who for a time at least, are flushed with unfailing success in every thing they undertake, and on whatsoever they lay their hands, it prospereth. And there are others, or possibly the same at other times, that are met in every attempt with loss, disaster, and disappointment. The plant which had flourished well, in the possession of their neighbor, withers and dies as soon as its title is transferred to themselves. But the enterprise that failed with these, begins to advance with success when abandoned by them, and yielded to the hands of the former ; as the ark of God was followed with plagues and death wherever it went among the cities of the Philistines, but was attended only with blessings and abounding prosperity, when lodged in the house of Obededom.

If we turn our attention, for a moment, to the companions of our schoolboy days, and trace up their short history in our recollections, and observe how they are now established in the business of life, we shall be struck with the force of those circumstances which have in a great measure moulded their char-

acter, formed their connections, and marked their various destiny. None could have predicted when they were children what would be their present situation. They were then alike careless of the future, or indulging their imaginations with ever-changing and pleasing fancies never to be realized. But time has been moving on, providence has been silently but constantly fulfilling its purposes, their character has received its stamp, and they are found moving in that sphere which perhaps they would not choose for themselves, but in which an unseen overruling power designed to place them. You look back and behold the line that he has described for them.

"God gives to every man  
The virtue, temper, understanding, taste,  
That lifts him into life, and lets him fall  
Just in the niche he was ordained to fill."

Our personal experience may also be full of similar instruction. We have hitherto been led, perhaps, in a way that we knew not. Our best schemes may have been frustrated; our fairest and most encouraging prospects have been darkened; our firmest purposes have been thwarted and abandoned; and new paths have unexpectedly opened before us, inviting and even requiring us to turn aside from the course we had determined to pursue. Our greatest blessings have been received at a time, and in a manner that we looked not for; our happiest efforts have been made when we had least confidence of success; and our most prosperous enterprises have often opened for us means and sources of profit that we could not anticipate. When we review the past, we are astonished to see how much we have been at the disposal of seemingly fortuitous circumstances,—how little influence our own plans and



resolutions have had in fixing our present condition. We are made to feel that "there is a divinity that shapes our ends." We thought we were free, and indeed we were so; but we have done that which we once resolved not to do, and we have strangely omitted that which we intended to accomplish. There is something that has overruled our efforts, and directed our course, and spread before us unthought-of scenes. The irreligious and the inconsiderate call it fate, or chance; but they who would render unto God the things that are God's, attribute it to his wise and ever watchful agency. They call it providence.

This sentiment is fully sustained by the current language of the Bible. Every event, however trifling in itself, is there represented as a subject of providential care and government. Every occurrence is referred to the immediate agency of God. Does a man leave his father's house and go to dwell in another country? it is because God leadeth him out. Does he there make a friend? it is because God giveth him favor in his sight. Do his flocks and his herds increase? it is God that multiplieth them. Is he able to appease an enemy? it is because God interposeth in his behalf. Does a man gain influence and authority among his fellow-men? it is God that promoteth him. Does he become disheartened and dejected? it is because an evil spirit from the Lord troubleth him. Is the sun obscured for a day? it is because with clouds God covereth the light. He maketh small the drops of water; they pour down rain according to the vapor thereof. He saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth. He scattereth the frost as ashes. And again, he causeth the springing of the earth. It is God that does these things. All nature, animate and inanimate, is rep-

resented as teaching this truth. "Ask now the beasts and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air and they shall tell thee. Or speak to the earth and it shall teach thee; and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee. Who knoweth not in all these things that the hand of the Lord hath wrought all this?"

It is every natural occurrence, and not merely those events which are termed miraculous, that is thus attributed to the agency of God. Nothing is more natural or simple than the story of Joseph,—his father's favoritism,—the consequent envy of his brethren,—their conspiracy against him,—and their selling him as a slave into Egypt. Yet he tells them expressly, when afterwards they trembled before his superior power, "Fear not; as for you, ye thought evil against me; but *God meant it* for good." The same providence which miraculously rescued the patriarch Isaac from the arm that was raised to slay him on the altar, is represented as directing all the little incidents of his domestic life, and securing for him, with a beautiful simplicity and naturalness, the love and kind offices of his bosom companion. The same God, who led forth the children of Israel through the waters of the Red sea, under the conduct of his servant Moses, protected the life of this Moses from early danger, and directed all those events which make up the affecting story of his infancy. It was he that led out the daughter of Pharaoh, by the river's side, to the very spot where the little ark, that enclosed the future hero, lay exposed among the flags, and touched her heart with compassion, as she opened it and saw the child, and behold the babe wept.

The prophecies of the Bible have often required, in their fulfilment, a divine control of the most natural and ordinary

transactions. It was, long before the time, predicted that the birth of Messiah should be in Bethlehem of Judah ; but it was the levy of a general tax by a Roman governor, that brought the parents of Jesus, from a distant place, to their own city Bethlehem, at the time the promised child was to be born. Jesus himself foretold the absolute destruction of Jerusalem ; but it was the obstinacy and rashness of its inhabitants, that provoked the besiegers to fulfil, to a letter, his prediction, and raze the walls, till one stone was not left upon another that was not thrown down.

But the express declarations of the Bible are, moreover, strong and decided. We are directly told, that "in God we live and move and have our being." "The ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings." Every thing, however insignificant, is an object of divine regard. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing ? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father ; but the very hairs of your head are all numbered." "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." "The heart of man deviseth his way ; but the Lord directeth his steps."

It is, therefore, no idle superstition that proclaimeth the constant, particular and universal providence of God. It is plainly taught by reason, by the natural feelings of man, and by the express as well as the implicit language of the Bible. God is continually around us. "He knoweth our downsitting and our uprising." "In his hand our breath is, and his are all our ways." We cannot stand before him, but he upholdeth us. We cannot pronounce a word, but he giveth us utterance. We cannot even sin against him, but the power to do it is derived from him. When we distrust him most, he is even then

sustaining our limbs and cherishing our life. It is only the misinterpretation of his providence that has ever exposed it to derision. It is only the pride and unbelief of the heart that refuses to confide in it. Away, then, with that infidelity which banishes God from the world which he has made, and leaves him but a distant, cold, abstract Being, regardless of the work of his hands. Away with that presumption that seizes on the gift and rejects the giver. Away with that weak-minded, cowardly, repining distrust, that fears to confide all to his care. Christian ! may you never despond. When you feel yourself in darkness and loneliness, still remember that your Father is there. When you are embarrassed and opposed, forget not that the hearts of all are in his hand. When you are cast down, remember that you are not forsaken ; still look up with cheerfulness, and behold your God, for he is nigh. " Cast all your care upon him ; for he careth for you." " Be anxious for nothing, but in every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your request be made known unto God." " In all your ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct your paths."

## SERMON VI.

THY COMMANDMENT IS EXCEEDING BROAD.—PSALM 119: 96.

THIS is the language of one who has long been conversant with the character and condition of mankind, and with the secret workings of his own heart. It is the language of observation and experience. The psalm which contains it was probably written by David, in his advanced age; and is the longest, and the most artificial in its structure, of any of his lyrical productions. It seems to be a calm, deliberate compilation of wise remarks and pious sentiments, which from time to time had occurred to the mind of its author, during a long course of varied and most trying events. It was apparently designed to refresh his recollections of the dispensations of Providence, to indulge his devout affections, to establish his faith in the wise and righteous government of God, to stamp the seal of worthlessness on all the follies and vanities of this world, and to impress more deeply on his own mind, as well as to inculcate on others the paramount importance of the truths of religion.

The history of the psalmist was full of instruction to himself. No man had ever experienced a greater variety of fortune; none had ever made a fairer experiment of the pleasures and powers of human life. From a retired, obscure shepherd boy, quietly leading his flocks along the hills and the valleys of

Bethlehem, he had become the powerful and illustrious king of Israel, boldly conducting his armies, through incessant conflicts, to victory and renown. The shepherd's staff had become a sceptre in his hand. The shepherd's reed, which once solaced his lonely hours in the field, and threw away its faint music on the brooks and the trees, was exchanged for a harp that resounded through the nation, and sent out its sweet, stirring notes, in songs that still instruct and comfort and delight the pious in every land. But he had risen to this elevation, and sustained himself upon it, through a series of hardships and disasters. His own life was a striking exemplification of the fact, which the contemplative observer has often noticed, that those whom God designs to make eminently useful, he usually afflicts with uncommon severity. David had seen and felt that this world in all its fulness, as well as in narrow penury, is utterly inadequate to satisfy the immortal, all-grasping, aspiring mind of man. He had seen, also, in his intercourse with his fellow-men, and in the watchful care which he exercised over his own soul, that human nature itself, even in its best specimens, is a disordered, defective, unsatisfying thing. He had seen the strongest subdued, the swiftest overtaken, the wisest befooled, the fairest deformed, and the holiest and most dignified degraded by shameful sin. And now, from the height of devout contemplation, he looked down on the world as it lay beneath him, with its living and its inanimate objects, and cast a glance backward on the path he had pursued; and there was nothing in all these scenes, on which his eye could rest with complacency,—nothing on which he could lean his faith,—nothing on which he could fasten his affection,—absolutely nothing to which he could resign himself. He knew too well

the hollowness of every thing here,—he had discerned something of the transcendent beauty and grandeur of divine holiness,—and turning from all the objects of earth with disgust, most of all, from the depraved nature of man, he breathed out his soul in fervent aspirations to his God, “I have seen an end of all perfection ; but thy commandment is exceeding broad.” It is broad ; for it covers the whole character. It is broad ; for it fills up every want. It is broad ; for nothing on earth reaches its extent.

The word, commandment, is undoubtedly here used in its fullest signification, and embraces somewhat metaphorically the whole system of religious truth. But for the present time, it is only intended to direct attention to a single part of this wide view,—and to consider a moment *the extent of the commandment, or law of God, in its moral requisitions.*

On this subject, you perceive at once the importance of obtaining correct and definite notions. The estimate we form of our own character must depend, if we are honest, on the views we entertain of the nature and extent of the law of God, with which our character is compared, and by which it is tested. If it were possible for us to regard this law, as more strict than it really is, we might, indeed, fall into a groundless despondency, and condemn ourselves for sins of which we were never guilty, and from which we could never reform. Our self-abasement and sorrow might rise to a degree altogether excessive. We might waste our energies in fruitless laments over those very actions and feelings which the God of nature intended that we should indulge and cherish. But if, on the other hand, where our danger, you will allow, is the greatest, we suffer ourselves through neglect, or heedlessness, or self-

indulgence, to form a defective conception of the purity and extent of the law, our character will be likely to be proportionately defective. Our penitence will be superficial, our reformation will be partial, and the slight aberration, of which we may consider ourselves guilty, will give us but little disquietude. The calls to repentance which come in quick succession from the word of God, and are echoed Sabbath by Sabbath from the lips of the preacher of the gospel, will fall as empty sounds on our ears. The concern which is manifested for the renovation of souls, will seem to us as idle, misanthropical and disgusting. We may even go on, in a delusion, despising the supposed hypocrisy of some, and laughing at the weak fears of others, till we awake from this delusion in eternity, and find to our astonishment, that we have mistaken the character of the law,—we have mistaken the character of ourselves, and are consequently lost, ruined for ever.

I. First of all, then, let us observe and understand and remember, that the law of God reaches the *heart*. It commands the disposition and the motives of men. The divine Governor regards not merely the overt actions, but the feelings and the choice of his intelligent creatures; not the external act alone, but the purpose that directs it, the state of feeling in which it is performed.

However manifest this truth may appear to the perceptions of a sound mind, on its bare enunciation, it is yet true, that we are liable to be misled, and are often misled into a practical error, by the influence of civil legislation and the rules of human society. From the very nature of the case, civil government can legislate only on the outward conduct of men;



and the peace and happiness of society require, that every man should be accounted as innocent, till some manifest development of perverseness proves him guilty. So long, therefore, as we offer no injury to the state or to individuals, but readily yield our support to the one, and discharge all acknowledged debts to the other, we are esteemed, by the law of our land and the rules of courtesy, as good patriots and good citizens, as upright and honest and honorable men. No matter whether we are actuated in all this, by truly honest and generous sentiments, or by sordid fear, an instinctive conformity to custom, a blind habit, or a love of self-aggrandizement. No matter, though ambition, or avarice, or sensuality may have taken almost entire possession of our hearts, we have yet broken no law, and do not suspect ourselves of being considered as criminals. We walk forth among our fellow-men, with the freedom of conscious innocence, unblushing and unabashed, and boldly claim from them all the civilities and respect and homage of integrity. Nor do we, in this, prefer a claim which any may presume to deny.

The direct tendency of this state of things is to weaken and pervert our moral sense, in relation to the divine government. We naturally and almost imperceptibly transfer the same feelings from the laws of man to the laws of God. If we do not blaspheme his holy name, or speak contemptuously of his word,—if we do not by open abuses profane his Sabbath, or manifest a disregard to any of his positive institutions,—if we coöperate, by the use of our wealth and influence, with the benevolent, in suppressing vice, and promoting virtue and religion,—if we do not defraud our neighbor, nor injure his reputation, his comfort, his thrift or his usefulness,—if we present to

him all the tokens of kindness, and constantly bestow the little attentions of enlightened and refined society,—we too seldom stay to examine the state of our hearts, and to inquire whether the inmost feelings of our souls are in harmony with the spirit of holiness, but hastily and fearlessly cherish a joyous complacency in our virtue. No man may say to us that we have violated the laws of Heaven ; and we will scarcely suffer our own conscience to reproach us, though pride and self-righteousness may mark within, every action that exhibits itself without. Yes, there may be those, who, in the true spirit of the Pharisee, secretly adopt his language, and their bosoms echo to his sentiment, “ Father, I thank thee that I am not as other men are,—extortioners, unjust, adulterers,—or even as this publican ; I fast twice in a week ; I give tithes of all that I possess ;” while God sees that they are at best but as whited sepulchres, beautiful without, but within full of all uncleanness. I appeal to you, if there may not be those, who, accustoming themselves to view the precepts of God in the same manner as they do the enactments of human legislation, will placidly look around on their own amiable and inoffensive deportment, and cast an eye along the commandments of the decalogue, and say to themselves, with precisely the same exultation of the young man in the gospel, “ all these have I kept from my youth up,”—while the Searcher of hearts doth know, that in this very feeling they violate the first command in the decalogue, by proudly idolizing their supposed morality.

A moment’s reflection, however, must be sufficient to dissipate this error, and remove the deception. For it has well been observed as intuitively evident, that if there be a fitness, a propriety in certain moral actions, it is because there is the

same propriety in the dispositions of which those actions are but the expression. If it be right for God to command the outward conduct of men, it is certainly right for him to command the feelings which are the internal springs of that conduct. If it be a duty for us to use the language of thanksgiving and praise toward the Lord our God, it is equally a duty to exercise the feeling of thankfulness and admiration, of which the language itself is at best a mere sign. For what are the actions of men, in themselves considered, but the varied operations of their physical organs,—the movements of a material machine? What are words but sounds? You utter the tones of devotion,—and it is well; so does the noble organ, that sends out its majestic and its softer notes from pipes that are cold and heartless and senseless. You present the aspect of solemnity in the church of God; so do the mourning weeds,—so does the sable urn that encloses lifeless clay. You are actively useful to your fellow-men; so are the winds, which fill their sails, and waft their merchandize from port to port.

It is the disposition, and this alone, which gives moral worth to our conduct. Why are we so much gratified with the civilities of strangers and the assiduities of friends, but because these civilities and these assiduities are received as tokens of inward respect and of kind regard? Why does the mother's eye sparkle, and her heart thrill with pleasure, as she receives the caresses of the infant that is smiling in her arms, but because she instinctively interprets these caresses as the spontaneous expression of affectionate feelings and tender emotions, such as none but a mother can fully appreciate? And will God, our best friend, our heavenly Father, who needs no sign to perceive our affection, our gratitude, our reverence and our

devotion, consent to receive, in their stead, the bare sign itself? You may, indeed, do much to increase the resources of public wealth and comfort ; so does the miser, and that, too, strangely against his will, who rises early and sits up late and eats the bread of carefulness, to accumulate possessions that will be expended on others, when his head is mouldering beneath the dust that he is now sifting for its grains of ore ; but yet God has declared that the covetous shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

The common decisions of men, even of the most hollow-hearted, where their own interest is not concerned, accord with this sentiment and confirm it. None are more ready than they to suspect the motives of their fellow-citizens, and to misinterpret their conduct. None are more ready to reproach the noblest enterprise with unsoundness of heart. The humble missionary of the cross, who voluntarily leaves the home of warm and delicate affection, the land of his birth, with all the endearments of refined society, and buries himself in the entangled forest, becomes the companion of savage men, wears out life in laboring for their good, and, by the blessing of God, succeeds in converting a moral wilderness into a fruitful field, loses all the glory of his enterprise as soon as he is suspected, only suspected of being singularly ambitious, and of seeking his own emolument. Verily, out of their own mouths shall men be judged, and their own words shall condemn them. What, therefore, will become of your flattering innocence, your forms of virtue, your forms of holiness, when the Omniscent shall lay open your inmost soul, and publish the dispositions that ruled you through life?

Well has God said : "My son, give me thy *heart*. Thou

shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy *heart*, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. With the *heart* man believeth unto righteousness. I the Lord search the *heart*; I try the reins of the children of men, to give to every one according to his ways, and according to the fruits of his doings."

II. Moreover, it is safe to affirm, secondly, that the requisitions of the divine law not only reach the heart, but they command every thought and every purpose of the heart. They are binding upon us, not only in matters of great moment, and on great occasions, but in all the trivial affairs of life, and at every instant in our moral being. For the same relations and the same principles, which make it right for God to give law to our conduct and our motives in one case, make it equally right for him to give law to them in the other. In either case, it is the disposition which our conduct indicates, that is the proper subject of divine legislation. And this is often better discovered by little incidents, than by great events. The falling of a leaf will give you much surer and plainer information of the direction in which the current of air is setting, than the descent of a stone. The man of habitual avarice will sometimes, and in peculiar circumstances, make an effort to contribute one splendid sum for the relief of suffering humanity; but it is the constant, the unostentatious beneficence of every day, that indicates the truly generous heart. It is the unremitting effusions of a holy heart, which, like the sustaining influences of heaven, are scarcely seen, but always felt, that accord with the requisitions of God's law. The sermon, which our Saviour himself preached to his disciples on the mount, was designedly and directly opposed to that perversion of the law, which the Pharisees had made, by

dividing their moral duties into the greater and the less,—those which must be scrupulously observed, and those which might be neglected with impunity. You will there find that the smallest offences are marked with the same character, in kind, as the greatest. “Ye have heard,” says the divine moralist, “that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say unto you, That whosoever is *angry* with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment.” A single revengeful feeling he interprets as murder,—a lascivious look as wantonness,—the abuse of a promise as the breach of an oath,—and adds, with solemn authority, “Be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect.”

Reason also assents to the propriety of the injunction. A perfect law can do no less than require perfect obedience. A perfectly holy God cannot allow the slightest deviation from rectitude. His character would be stained, his glory tarnished, unsinners would stand amazed, their outflowing affections recoil, their golden harps cease to give out unqualified notes of admiration and applause, the universe would be disturbed, if God should for a moment descend to regard with complacent indulgence in his intelligent creatures, the smallest degree of malignity, of envy, of ingratitude, of pride, of sensuality, of selfishness. His government would be weakened for ever; and he could no longer justly require us to love him with all our heart. Even that earthly parent, who condemns though ever so rigidly the flagrant wickedness of his children, but allows or connives at their petty crimes, soon loses his authority, and the respect that is due to the relation he sustains. The nature of wrong is in all circumstances, and every

degree, essentially the same. He who allows it in one instance, virtually allows it in another; and he who commits it in one instance, his disposition remaining the same, wants but the opportunity and the temptation to commit it in another. Hence it is as Inspiration has told us, that he who offends in one point, is guilty of all,—he has violated the same authority which sanctions the whole,—he has broken from law,—he has disowned his allegiance.

The law of God, then, covers our whole conduct. It reaches every emotion of the heart. It goes with us into the every-day business of life, and forbids every covetous desire, every dishonest look, every fretful word, and every unkind expression. It enters with us into the domestic circle, and forbids every peevish or taunting remark, every unaccommodating act, every breach of trust, every feeling of a perturbed temper. It follows us in the loneliness of retirement, and forbids every unseemly passion, every base indulgence, and every discontented emotion. It is with us in prosperity, and forbids all pride, all vanity, all self-confidence and exultation. It does not leave us in the hour of adversity, but stands by the bed-side of sickness and distress; it is found in the abode of poverty and disgrace and wretchedness; it presides in the bosom of disappointment, of mortification and woe to which all are strangers but yourself, and even here lifts its authoritative voice, and forbids every murmuring groan, every rebellious sigh, every feeling of the heart that is not in perfect reconciliation to the dispensations of Heaven. In short, wherever you are, by night or by day, the law is still hovering around, and bending its eagle glance on your heart, and frowning on every

movement that does not harmonize with the moral character of God.

Nor is this all : the law prohibits not only what is positively wrong, but utters its denunciations against all those negative sins, which make up a large part of the sins of mankind, and yet are too commonly overlooked. You will recollect, that in the representation which our Saviour has given of the final judgment of the world, the whole catalogue of crimes which the King enumerates against those who are sentenced to everlasting punishment is precisely of this negative character: "I was an hungered," says he, "and ye gave me no meat : I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink : I was a stranger, and ye took me not in : naked, and ye clothed me not : sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Yea, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, my brethren, ye did it not unto me." And in the parable of the man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, that stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and left him in a helpless, pitiable condition ; the priest and the Levite are condemned, simply for *passing by* his misfortunes, and *neglecting* to relieve his distresses. Ah ! what an awful, overwhelming condemnation awaits those, at some future day, who now *pass by* the moral wretchedness of our world, all weeping and imploring as it is, and extend no hand for its relief ! Then may the Judge say to them on his left hand ; "My Sabbaths were profaned and ye did nothing to defend them ; my children were growing up in ignorance, and ye made no efforts to instruct them ; my people were dying by nations without the gospel, and ye provided no means to proclaim it to them ; my sons and



my daughters were living in sin and passing your own doors on their way to destruction, and ye raised no warning voice!" Save us, O God, from the withering, burning curse that must follow!

Nor does the law leave us with simply rebuking these more palpable instances of neglect; it necessarily reproves even the smallest and the most common default in holiness. Every moment, in which our hearts are not conformed to the universal law of supreme love to God, and impartial benevolence to mankind, we are as really, though not as heinously, sinning against the government of Heaven, as he who never utters the name of God but with an oath, nor observes his Sabbath but as a season of pastime. In every act of our life, however trifling it may be, whether we eat, or drink, or whatever we do, we are commanded to do all to the glory of God. And think you, do they do all to the glory of God, who spend hours and days, without forming one purpose to glorify God,—with scarce a thought of his existence, and without one glowing emotion of love to him? Do they obey the requisitions of this law, who in business and in merriment almost forget that there is such a law? Let those, who so justly and severely censure the formal religionist,—the hypocritical pretender,—and exult in the sincerity of their own professions, and their open freedom from all pretensions to sanctity, reflect with equal honesty on the transgressions they are committing, and the guilt they are accumulating, in this very destitution of the spirit and the name of holiness. Let those, who express such a well-founded dread of touching the Lord's table with polluted hands, and of eating and drinking unworthily the sacred emblems of his body and blood, think also of the greatness of

their sin, in disobeying for years the last affectionate, dying injunction of their suffering Saviour: "This do in remembrance of me." Oh, who can tell the evil that is done to the universe, and the offence that is given to God, by our sins of neglect! The man who discovers the devouring element just bursting out from the roof of your dwelling, and makes no effort to suppress it, and gives no alarm of the danger, is scarcely less criminal than the midnight incendiary. And the man, who only withholds his affections from God, is numbered by eternal justice among the open violaters of his commands.

III. It may now be affirmed, with equal truth, in the third place, that the law which reaches the heart, and every purpose and affection of the heart, extends in full force to every moral agent, and is obligatory, without any mitigation on all mankind. After what has already been said, this remark might seem superfluous, were it not for a secret, cherished feeling which sometimes lurks in the human heart, that the law which is so reasonable and right in its perfect requisitions upon all innocent beings, has abated somewhat its strictness towards us, the frail, erring, fallen sons of Adam. But what, my friends, can excuse us? Is it urged that our depravity, our moral degeneracy, our aptitude to sin, must diminish, in some measure at least, our obligation to obey the perfect law of holiness. Then is it asked, and the question demands a definitive answer,—In what proportion does the depravity of the offender lessen the guilt of his offence? And how strong must his inclination to evil become, in order to free him from all restraint, and send him forth into the world, a weak, depraved, but an innocent being? What shall we say of those who are given over to hardness of heart and blindness of mind? What shall we

say of those evil spirits who are reserved under chains, in darkness, to the judgment of the great day? What shall we say of the arch foe of God and man, who is weltering in the abyss of wo? Must not our feelings towards them be transformed from indignation to pity,—from loathing to love,—from an approval of the justice that punishes them, to a complacent sympathy with suffering innocence? But common sense revolts at the consequences of such a principle, and we are compelled to admit that no degree of depravity can soften or restrict the requisitions of the law. We are all bound, and must for ever be bound, however perverse our disposition, to obey the holy law in perfection.

But there is still another way, in which men are sometimes prone to quiet conscience, and relieve themselves from the strictness of the divine commands. Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, pitying the sad condition of our race, gave his own soul an offering for sin, to redeem us from the curse of the law; and therefore we would vainly persuade ourselves, that he has redeemed us from obligation to obey that law. Yet mark his own words on this point: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfil,"—to confirm; "For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law." His own life was a constant testimony to its excellence, and his own death did but magnify it and make it honorable. It was such a display of the righteousness and immutability of the divine government as God alone could give; such as men or angels never witnessed but then. Jesus, by his sufferings, his obedience and death, has indeed opened a way whereby God can be just and yet justify him

that believeth. But he can justify only him that believeth, him that approves the law, and aims to be conformed to it, him that is watching and praying and striving against all those propensities which seduce him into sin. It is, then, disobedience to that law which the Christian adopts in all its strictness as the rule of his life, that constitutes his remaining sin ; and O, what a happy, glorious moment it will be in his existence, when, through divine grace, he becomes victorious over all his sinful tendencies, and his own heart does but reflect the pure, shining light of God's law ! This indeed is a transcript of God's moral perfection, and must remain the rule of right, unsullied and unbroken, so long as his throne shall endure,—so long as he himself is a proper object of our love and our homage.

The law of God, therefore, most clearly and demonstrably extends, in its requisitions, to the heart,—to every purpose and affection of the heart,—and is binding, without the least abatement of its strictness, on every individual moral agent among the children of men. None can escape from its authority ; there is not an instant in which the feelings of the soul are free from its demands. And who of us can contemplate this result without emotion ? We have not been discussing a cold, distant, abstract principle, that we should regard it with the same calm indifference with which we admit the conclusion of a mathematical calculation. It is no abstraction ; it is a present reality ; it is warm with life ; it comes home to our own bosoms ; it lays its finger on every fibre of our heart, and commands it to vibrate in unison with the Spirit of God.

The subject, if thoroughly and faithfully pursued in our own minds, will give us an awakening and stimulating view of our

duty. The demands of God are not satisfied with our external conduct, however correct ; nor with our occasional obedience, however sincere. Religion is not the garb of sanctity, with which we may clothe ourselves, as with our best apparel, on great occasions or particular seasons, and put it off again at pleasure. It must become an inwrought principle of the soul, pervading the whole man, informing every feature, speaking in the eye, beaming on the cheek, and giving grace to every movement. It is not a specific precept, and applicable only in peculiar circumstances ; it is a constantly presiding spirit,—inspiring every emotion, breathing in every prayer, moving in every act, and moulding the heart of man into the image of God. Here then is a mighty work for the weak, erring, depraved creature, who is but just beginning to turn his affections towards his Creator. Christian ! you need all the watchfulness and resolution and energy and self-denial and untiring effort, which the word of God and the example of apostles and martyrs can excite. You need all the grace from above which habitual, fervent prayer can procure.

From this subject, we may learn also, the nature of what is properly termed conviction of sin. Our estimate of moral character, like that of every thing else, is formed by comparison. We know nothing of what is great or good, except by comparison with some standard of magnitude or excellence. From the combined influence of various causes, this standard,—the proper rule of right and wrong,—is often absent from our mind, or makes but a slight impression upon it. Surrounded as we are by sinful and sinning men, swayed as we are in our judgment by passion and appetite, habituated to transgression from our very infancy, prone to self-indulgence,

always averse to self-crimination, naturally reluctant to cherish anticipations of evil, and solicited every hour to give our attention to passing business, or passing pleasures ; the voice of conscience is not heard, its delicate perceptions are unfelt, its sensibilities grow dull, the law becomes a shadow ; and we pass heedlessly and gaily along, with scarce a suspicion that we may be all the while guilty, in some degree, of those very feelings, and that very conduct, which hurled Satan from his seat in heaven, and which, if impenitently persisted in, will one day make us his companions in hell. The brightness of generous mirth is playing on our countenance, and we dream not of the pollution that covers our heart. But, in the hour of pensive recollection and tenderness, when some calamity has arrested our thoughts, or some solemn truth has fastened on our mind,—when the Spirit of God comes, as with a magic influence, and whispering us in the ear, reveals the strictness and extent of that law we are bound to obey, and bids us contrast it with the feelings of our soul, and the character of our life,—a hitherto unknown and hideous monster starts up in our bosoms ; and the language of Job is not too strong for us, as casting an imploring look on the Spirit that has made to us the awful discovery, and sending a hasty but searching glance along the pure law which is but the reflected image of this Spirit, we exclaim, with unaffected and overwhelming sorrow, “I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee ; wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes !” And again we add, with the apostle : “I had not known sin but by the law ; I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. O wretched man that I am ;

who shall deliver me from the body of this death !” This is not the language of fanaticism. There is no wildness, no extravagance here. It is the result of sober conviction. The mind sees the wickedness that is within ; and the swelling, heaving, melting heart bursts out in those tears of penitential grief, which the world may gaze at with wonder or derision, but which God looks down upon with a smile of complacency.

I cannot but remark, in conclusion, that this subject gives a fearful conception of the remorse which they must suffer, who are finally driven away in their wickedness. They will not be condemned unheard nor unconvicted. The law which they now slight must try them ; their own life be witness against them ; and conscience, waked by the crash of worlds and the flood-light of eternity, must decide on their destiny, and read to them that sentence of self-condemnation, which will echo and reëcho through their hearts with incessant horror. O, flee from the danger, while the angel of mercy waits to be gracious,—while he waits to receive you !

## SERMON VII.

BUT I KNOW YOU, THAT YE HAVE NOT THE LOVE OF GOD IN YOU.

—JOHN 5: 42.

THE Jews, to whom this declaration was made by him who knew what was in man, were very strict and zealous religionists. They even boasted, that they were the only true worshippers of the living God. By those of them who had any regard to consistency of character, nothing was allowed to interfere with their religious observances. They would sacrifice every thing to the support of their religion; they would dispute to maintain it; they would fight in its defence; they would die on its account. But when Christ came, urging its principles home upon their own hearts, preaching repentance for the remission of sins, and teaching, that without faith, notwithstanding all their punctilious rites, it was impossible to please God, a rancorous hostility was stirred within them, and they sought to slay him. The Father, they still pretended to love and adore; but the Son, who was the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person, they despised and treated with contumely. The writings of Moses and the prophets, they still professed firmly to believe, but rejected with disdain him of whom Moses and the prophets did speak. This was a simple development of human nature. Jesus saw the hypocrisy of their religious professions, and the



hollowness of their pretended love of God, while they rejected God's own most perfect representative. He therefore told them plainly the real cause of their opposition to him and his doctrines. "Had ye believed Moses," says he,—had ye really believed Moses,—"ye would have believed me. But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you."

It is not for a sinful, erring man to assume the language and the tone of him who reads the heart with an eye of omniscience, and to say to his fellow, "I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you." Such language would ill become the lips of a depraved, ignorant, helpless creature. But we may and ought to exhort one another to a serious, honest, faithful self-examination. If the Pharisaical Jews,—those strict observers of religious forms, and external duties,—those zealous advocates and supporters of what they esteemed the only true worship,—were exposed to the accusation of the text, is it not possible that some of us, who have come to the house of God, with an air of dignity and self-complacency, may be liable to a similar charge? Is it not possible, that some of us, who have long trusted in a profession of love to God, may yet be found to have nothing but the profession? Is it not possible, that some of us who have often sat at the table of Jesus, might plead in vain before his tribunal, "We have eaten and drank in thy presence?" Is it not possible, that even now the recording angel may be writing against us, notwithstanding all our self-denying services and contentious zeal for God, 'I know you, that the *love* of God is not in you?' We know, indeed, that it is possible for us. In our haste to quell our fears, and encourage our hopes, and gratify our self-esteem, we do not always sufficiently discriminate the motives

of our conduct ; we do not readily separate the love of a Saviour's cause from a love of our own partial, distorted notions of it, or from a selfish attachment to our own purposes, and peculiar methods of promoting it. We may even suffer ourselves to be deceived by our own external deportment. We may willingly and easily forget that this does not necessarily correspond with the feelings of the heart. We may forget that it is not always Christian humility that dejects the head ; that it is not always rigid virtue that builds a frown on the brow, and contracts the muscles of the face ; that there are other tears than those of penitence, and other joys than those of pardoned sin. We may subject ourselves to all the odium and reproach of religious conscientiousness, without experiencing one emotion of religious feeling. We may secure to ourselves all the reverence of religious austerity, without having a single passion subdued to religious authority.

I. I observe, therefore, in the first place, that they may reasonably consider themselves as destitute of the love of God, who are not conscious of possessing it. The danger of self-deception, great as it is, is not a necessary danger. You will find throughout the Bible, that such deception is invariably spoken of in connection with heedlessness, rashness, presumption, self-indulgence, acknowledged wickedness, wilful dishonesty. "If any man thinketh himself to be something, when he is nothing, *he* deceiveth himself." "*The pride of thine heart* hath deceived thee." "If we say we have *no sin*, we deceive ourselves." "If any man seem to be religious, and *bridleth not his tongue*, but deceiveth himself." "For we ourselves, also, were sometimes *foolish, disobedient*, deceived, serving divers *lusts* and *pleasures*, living in *malice* and *envy*,

*hateful* and *hating* one another." Here is the secret of the deception. "*Evil* men and *seducers* shall wax worse and worse, *deceiving* and being deceived." It is the pride of heart, thoughtless neglect, cherished sin and known disobedience, that occasions and accompanies this deception. It were a sad condition, indeed, for a poor, dependent creature to be placed in, if God had commanded us, on the penalty of eternal death, to give him our hearts, and left us without the possibility, or even without the certain means, of ascertaining whether we have complied with his demands or not. It were a shameful reproach on the character and government of God, to suppose that he has subjected a weak, humble, anxiously inquiring soul to a lasting *necessity* of doubtfulness,—an unavoidable exposure to deception. No! It is at best but a baneful error, by which many a modest Christian, like the sensitive, delicate, conscientious Cowper, is kept in darkness and despondency, deprived of his appropriate joys, and prevented from his proper activity and usefulness. It is a device of Satan, by which many a compromising, heartless professor of religion is encouraged to hope, without any foundation for his hope. It is a device of Satan, by which he throws "a shield as of triple brass" over the conscience of many an impenitent sinner, and defends him even against the two-edged sword of the Spirit. The too commonly received opinion, that but few, if any, can be satisfied of their own piety, has probably unnerved the arm and palsied the energies of thousands, who might otherwise have been powerful, happy agents in opposing the prince of darkness, and in building up the kingdom of Christ. It is equally probable, that the same opinion has carried thousands more, in a cloud of doubt and uncertainty, to the shades of

eternal night, who scarcely knew whether they were rising to heaven or sinking to hell.

I repeat it, then, that they have every reason to believe themselves destitute of the love of God, who were never conscious of possessing it. We are certainly conscious of every other feeling that habitually exists in the heart, and do not hesitate to say, with absolute positiveness, that we love one object, and dislike another, and are indifferent in regard to a third. The mother, as she bends with tender affection over her sleeping infant, does not doubt that she loves the darling babe. The child that watches, with ceaseless assiduity and sympathetic pain, the dying couch of a fond parent, does not doubt the existence of filial affection. The friends who are bound together by an attachment that death itself cannot sever, need not long inquire whether any real friendship subsists between them. The aspiring politician will not doubt his fondness for promotion. The man of avarice need not be told that he has a love of gain. And must the Christian,—who cannot, indeed, be a Christian, unless he loves his Lord more than all these,—more than father or mother, brother or sister, yea, or his own life,—be for ever in doubt whether any such love of God exists in his bosom? Has he any reason to *suppose* that he is the possessor of supreme love to God, who is wholly unconscious of its existence? Constituted as we are, can there be such a thing as a supreme affection in the heart of him who is not conscious of the affection? It is absurd,—it is preposterous to suppose it! As well might the lover of pleasure talk of his supreme delight in the chase or the dance, without ever having been conscious of that delight. As well might you speak of a taste for the viands on which you daily

feed, without even being sensible of that taste. As well might you claim an emotion which you never felt, or a feeling of which you were never conscious. If your heart does ever melt, and your bosom heave with supreme affection towards God, you may, you must know it. If you are never conscious of that affection, you need not doubt, that it is yet a stranger to your soul. Peter could say to his Master, with a simple-hearted honesty, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee;" for he felt it. And Inspiration has inquired, in tones of astonishment and rebuke, "Know ye not yourselves, how that Jesus Christ *is* in you, except ye be reprobates?"

II. It is perhaps but exhibiting the same thing under a different aspect, to add, in the *second place*, that they are destitute of the love of God, who are not ordinarily grateful to him. So monstrous and odious is the crime of ingratitude, even when indulged towards an enemy, that all men will unite in denouncing it. None will pretend to extenuate its guilt, however difficult they find it to rid themselves of the charge. Even a heathen has said, you have brought upon a man every possible reproach, when you have fixed upon him the stigma of ingratitude. Where then is the man who is so inhuman, as to be the recipient of daily favors from a friend, without exercising corresponding emotions of thankfulness! Nay, where is the possibility, that he should *love* that friend, and yet be ungrateful!

But God is such a friend,—the author of our being, of our capacities of enjoyment, and of all the powers and means of enjoyment. He formed us from the dust of the earth, and breathed into that inanimate clay the breath of life, and gave

us a living soul, and stamped his own image upon it. He gave to man his lofty intellect and his boasted superiority over the brutes that flee before him or tamely submit to his control. He gave to the proud philosopher the mighty power of thought, by which he urges his disputed way into nature's guarded sanctuary, and compels her to reveal the hidden mysteries. He gave to the flattered poet, the light and graceful wing, on which he gaily ascends into the region of imagination, and plays with the scenes of earth as sportively as the sunbeams seem to play, in their varied hues, with the clouds that are floating around us. He gave to beauty its every charm, to refinement every grace, to manliness all its grandeur. He lighted up the skies, with their unnumbered gems, and bade the sun to march his perpetual rounds, cheering us with the flood-light of his glory by day, and soothing us with his reflected rays by night. He causes the earth that we tread upon to spread out its green and flowery carpet beneath our feet,—he fills the air with its fragrance,—he bids the spring to smile upon us with its promising blossoms, and he loads in the harvest, bending beneath its burthen for our support. He has given to society its fascinations,—to domestic life its delicate pleasures,—to home its tender joys. He has given to us the ingenuity and the skill by which we work out the conveniences that accommodate us, the comforts that bring happiness, the magnificence that elevates and delights us. He has given to us the sublimity of contemplation, the curiosity and the aspirations of a growing, immortal mind, the hope of infinite improvement and of eternal bliss. He has opened to us an avenue to his throne, and called to us to come up thither without dismay and without distrust. Yea, and when guilt,

soul-depressing guilt and shame had confounded our faculties, and paralysed every power to ascend, he sent his own Son from his right hand, to wipe away our tears, to quiet our fearful apprehensions, and lead us upward to his embrace. I will not ask, if ingratitude for such favors does not deserve eternal infamy and eternal woe. I will not ask if *it be possible* for man to be ungrateful. We know it is too true,—astonishingly true. “Hear, O heavens ! and give ear, O earth ! I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib, yet Israel doth not know, my people do not consider.” But my subject brings me now to ask, is it possible, that man should *love* such a benefactor,—that man should *love* his Father and his God, and feel no emotions of gratitude towards him ? Is it possible that a man should love, really and sincerely love a constant benefactor, and not be habitually grateful ? Tell me of the instance of such unnatural divorce. Point me to the acknowledged benefactor, whom you cordially love, but for whom you cherish no feelings of thankfulness. No ! it is not in man,—it is not in nature, that such kindred, connected feelings should ever be separated. If you are destitute of gratitude, be sure you are destitute,—you are destitute of love. If you are not habitually grateful, be sure you are of those to whom the eternal Word hath said : “I know you, that ye have not the *love* of God in you.”

But after all, the existence of gratitude is to be discerned in the same way that the existence of love is directly discernible,—by our consciousness. And thus the view we are now taking of our subject brings us to the same point with the view we had already taken. It is but presenting the subject in a

different attitude, and under a varied light. If we are not *conscious* of a feeling of love towards God, it is but rational and fair to conclude, that we do not possess it. And if we are not equally conscious of gratitude, which is a necessary consequence of love towards a benefactor, we have but a redoubled assurance of the same fact. True gratitude is not a mere vague, indefinite feeling of gladness, like that which the gamester feels, when by a fortunate chance, a lucky throw, he has retrieved a squandered fortune,—like that which the ambitious man feels, when by unexpected success he has triumphed over his rival,—like that which the fraudulent person feels when he has wittingly overreached his neighbor,—like that which the prisoner feels when he has made his escape from confinement. It is an affectionate, noble, deep-felt sense of obligation; it is always directed towards a definite object,—towards the person that has conferred the obligation; it is the return which a generous spirit desires to make for favor that cannot be otherwise requited,—and is always proportioned to the value and the freeness of the gift. If such a feeling exists in your bosom, you may be conscious of it. If your gratitude be so weak, so vague, so subtle, so evanescent in its nature, that you cannot be conscious of it, I ask with boldness, What is it? and how do you perceive its existence? And again, if you are not conscious of genuine, habitual, strongly marked gratitude towards your best friend, your greatest benefactor, the giver of all you enjoy and all you have, your Father and your God,—what reason have you to indulge a belief that you have any love for your God? No, your own heart must condemn you; and he who is greater than your heart, and knoweth all things, will confirm the half-suppressed and hastily



bushed voice of your conscience, and proclaim in thrilling tones, 'I know you, that the *love* of God is *not* in you.'

III. In the *third place*, they need not hesitate to condemn themselves of a want of this affection, who do not delight to maintain an habitual and devoted intercourse with him. It is the impulse of our nature to avail ourselves of every suitable opportunity to hold intercourse with the friends whom we love. The happiest hours of common life are spent in their society. When absence deprives us of this pleasure for a season, imagination comes and brings its substitute; we are often transported in thought to the place of their residence; fancy pictures out the scene, and we love to linger in the ideal conversation that is passing between us. Anticipation wings the fleeting hours that are expected to give all a happy reality. Even the inanimate page that passes and repasses as the messenger of intelligence, seems almost to breathe with life, to glow with thought and feeling, to speak with a voice of well-known eloquence. This is nature. It is common to all,—to the parent and the child, the brother and the friend. Neither business nor recklessness can entirely destroy it. Time itself will never wholly efface it. Manliness is not ashamed of it, heroism condescends to it, enterprise and adventure give it room.

Have you, then, nothing of this fondness for an habitual intercourse with God who is ever present,—who is infinitely nobler and lovelier than any earthly being,—who is more intimately connected with you, and more interested in your welfare, as your father, your guide, your benefactor, and your friend,—who is perfectly frank and sincere in all he has said, in all he does,—who is at all times, and easily, accessible; nay, who even

invites and urges you to come freely, and to unbosom your whole soul to him as your confidant, and then assures you that they who trust him shall not want any good? When you are prosperous, have you no pleasure in speaking to him of your prosperity, and acknowledging the richness of his favors? When you are disappointed, embarrassed, perplexed, afflicted and sorrowful, have you no mitigation of your pains in telling him all your troubles, and venting your grief in a free utterance of all your feelings to him, who will sympathize and can help? Do you ask his counsel and assistance in the business of every day? In the midst of all your cares and toils and joys, do your aspirations never arise to him as spontaneously and as easily as your breath ascends on the air? Is it irksome to you to meditate upon him in the night watches, to fix as it were a steadfast, brightening eye upon him in the retirement of your closet, to bow to him before the family altar, to mingle your prayers and praises with them who keep holy times in his house? Do days and even weeks pass away with scarce a joyous thought of him, and without one moment of pleasing, heartfelt communion with him? Be sure, be sure, for you need not doubt, whatever else may be your character, however else you may feel, you do not love him. "You have not the love of God in you." You may have done much for his cause, you may have been strictly honest and even generous in your conduct towards his creatures, you may have been scrupulously exact in the performance of every external duty, you may have made loud professions of pious attachment, you may have often renewed your pledge of devotedness, you may still make formal and ostentatious, or modest and implied pretensions of love to him, but the pretension is all that you have,—

‘the love of God is not in you.’ The voice of the Holy Ghost declares it; and nature, though awed by the declaration, whispers that it is true.

IV. Again, those are destitute of the love of God, who have no pleasure in speaking of him,—of his character, of his works, his government, and his providence. A man’s disposition and tastes and sentiments are discoverable from his chosen topics of conversation, and the manner in which he speaks on the various subjects that are suggested. “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” The scholar is continually reverting, in his thoughts and conversation, to those studies which are most congenial to his taste, and to those authors whom he most admires and loves to contemplate. His mind awakes with new energy when they are mentioned, and his tongue grows eloquent in delineating their character, and speaking their praises. The devoted reader of fiction becomes strong and enthusiastic in describing his noblest heroes, though they have lived only in imagination. His spirit rises and swells with a sort of dignified pride, while he recounts the glorious deeds, repeats the manly expressions, and speaks of the valor and the greatness of the magnanimous Othello; or his heart expands and softens with a generous sympathy, while he tells of the artless, innocent, unsuspecting, affectionate, but hapless Desdemona. The diffident, unpretending child rouses from its reveries and lifts its modest head to listen, or even dares to speak, when its dearest friends are made the subject of remark. The political partisan can scarcely conceal or disguise his attachment to some favorite ruler. Ignorance itself becomes learned, and the stammering tongue grows fluent, when his merits are to be discussed. The eye that was dim before, sparkles with

new lustre, and the vacant countenance is filled with intelligence and glows with ardor. At this distant day, the very name of Washington is music ; it comes like a magic charm on the ear ; old age recovers its youth, and childhood rises into the vigor of maturity at the sound ; the conversation, which had flagged before, revives with the animation of a new-born enterprise.

Is it possible, then, that any should deceive themselves with a cherished hope that they are the lovers of God, while they take no pleasure, and feel themselves lost, in speaking of him ? Has enthusiasm lost all its ardor, and eloquence its power of free and varied utterance, on such a subject as this ? Is the countenance sunk and the eye fallen, when the glories of the Godhead, the majesty of heaven, the grandeur of creation, the wisdom and the goodness of providence, the magnanimity and compassion of a suffering, dying Saviour, are the theme of speech ? Is the glow of wakeful attention exchanged for the cold stupidity of a marble statue ? Do the mind and the heart within suddenly cease their active movements, as if their work were now done,—as if this were a subject foreign to their pursuits ? Do the outflowing feelings of the soul come rushing back to their source ? Does flippancy sit grave and mute,—at best but a dull hearer, or sustaining only a heavy, monosyllabic, unnatural part in the cheerless conversation ? Does genius exchange its freshness and its richness for cold, unmeaning common-places ? Does the restless eye look anxious and watchful to exchange the theme, or guard against its personal application ? My friend ! you need not doubt, you need not spend one moment longer, one more gloomy thought in self-examination,—the sad truth is open before you, as it is before the eye of heaven,—‘the *love* of God is not in you.’

V. This self-condemning taciturnity or hesitation, on a topic of so much interest, sometimes finds, however, an apology in the awful *sacredness* of the subject, and indifference puts on the form and the aspect of *reverence*. Beware, then, lest you be found among those who feel no interest in the cause, and no regard for the honor of God : for they also are destitute of love to him. It is true that God is infinitely exalted above us, and needs not our praises or our love. It is true that he is independent of us in his happiness and his glory, except so far as he himself has been pleased to connect them with our characters and conduct. But it is not true that he is without sensibilities, or that these sensibilities are ever unaffected. That philosophy, or that theology, which fears to attribute to him the emotions of grief and sorrow as well as love and joy,—does not fear to take from him his most attractive loveliness,—does not fear to take from the language of the Bible all its meaning,—does not fear to take from God all the affections with which we can sympathize,—does not fear to rob him of every thing but a cold intellect, an awful power, to leave him an abstract principle,—nay, to take from us all that is definite and all that is certain in revelation respecting him. For the same rules of interpretation, by which you interpret the language of the Bible that ascribes grief and sorrow to God in a sense entirely different and unlike the grief and sorrow of man, will compel you, in consistency, to interpret the language that ascribes joy and happiness to him, as also entirely different and unlike the joy and happiness of man. And if the ascribed emotions of God are in kind so unlike our emotions, to which we apply the same words, why are not his wisdom, his justice, his truth, his every attribute, also, in kind entirely unlike the wisdom and

the justice which we exercise, entirely unlike every thing which belongs to us, and consequently every thing of which we can conceive. But who is this that is thus demolishing the whole revealed, conceived character of God? It is the pride of human reason; it is the pride of imperfect, finite man, that feebly forms its own notion of perfection, and would then shape the character of the perfect God according to that notion, till it has entirely destroyed it. God does feel; he may be grieved with our wickedness, and he may rejoice in our obedience. And they who do not regard his happiness and his honor, are destitute of love to him. Ye then are destitute of love to him, who can endure to hear his name profaned, and feel no wound upon your tenderest sensibilities,—who can endure to hear his cause reproached, and suffer no indignity, express no displeasure, and make no effort in its defence. Ye are destitute of love to him, who can see his institutions prostrated, and not gather around them for their support. Ye are destitute of love to him, who can make no effort, or but feeble and inefficient exertions to promote his kingdom on earth, unless you may be exalted to a conspicuous and commanding place in that kingdom. Ye are destitute of love to him, who can withdraw your support from his cause, and raise a commotion among his friends, and baffle the efforts of his advocates, and stay the progress and hinder the triumph of his work, whenever you may feel that these his friends and his advocates do not render you all the deference and the respect which is your due. You are destitute of love to him, who feel no interest in his happiness, and no regard to his honor, save when your own happiness is thereby promoted, and your own honor exalted.

VI. Finally, they are destitute of the love of God, who do not render him a cheerful obedience. I say a cheerful obedience; for that obedience that works by constraint and with irksomeness, is the obedience of a slave, and not of a friend; the obedience of fear and not of love. A strong attachment makes the burthen of duty light. We often forget the pains of our toil, when we are subserving the interests of a friend. But you find it a penance to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. It is a painful task to mortify your passions, and bring them into subjection. It is a heart-rending sacrifice to contribute bountifully of your possessions for the support of the worship of God, and the dissemination of his revealed truths. You can give but a reluctant, faltering service to those institutions and those associations which are designed to promote his glory. You engage with backwardness, and often by constraint, in the various operations of Christian philanthropy. You go to the business of religion, like a schoolboy to his task, like a slave to his exacted labor. And would you know the secret of this disrelish for your imposed religious duties? 'The love of God is not in you.' You may, indeed, goad yourself onward to the performance of acknowledged duties,—you may deceive your fellow-men, by your strict observances, and your apparent zeal and your apparent benevolence,—you may deceive yourself by this self-opposing effort and this show of obedience, but you have only the form of godliness without the power of it. The Omniscient looks through all these forms, and reads the heart, and proclaims, as he reads, "I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you."

From this view of our subject we may learn, that it is not difficult to ascertain, satisfactorily, what is our true character;

and consequently what are our prospects for the eternal world. There may be times, it is true, when our physical nature and our sympathizing minds are diseased,—when a dark, damp and oppressive atmosphere gathers and settles around us ; when no star shines athwart the gloom to tell us which way is heaven, and whither we are going. The bright hope we once enjoyed is overclouded, our knowledge of God is confused and obscure, the few truths that we dimly perceive fail to produce their wonted excitement, or to exert upon us their proper influence, and we walk on in darkness and doubt and mournfulness ; but this is not our habit. If there be religious feeling in the soul, it will revive and brighten and glow, and we must be conscious of it. The affections of a young convert, when first torn forcibly from earthly objects, are sometimes faint, and slowly fasten themselves with a feeble, trembling hold on God. But they will gain strength and vigor, and ere-long be conscious of their power ; and not unfrequently it happens, on the contrary, that the new-born soul is conscious of a warm, moving love to God, before it dares to hope. If, then, this affection has existed months and years in your bosom, you may know it. You need not pass the threshold, till you have ascertained to entire satisfaction, whether you are going onward and upward to God, with the love of him in your heart, or moving away from his presence, with a sluggish, cheerless indifference, and bending your way downwards to mingle with his inveterate and wretched foes.

Christians, ye who have borne the test, ye who are conscious of heartfelt love to God, of habitual gratitude for his favors, who delight to hold daily communion with him in meditation and prayer, who are interested in his happiness, and regardful



of his honor, and ordinarily obey him with cheerfulness,—do not doubt,—the love of God *is* in you. Fear not to hope,—think it not presumptuous to avow your belief that you are the children of God and the heirs of heaven. Why should you distrust your own consciousness? It is by this you know that you exist. By this, in varied experiments, you know you are the lovers of God. And neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any thing in creation, shall be able to separate you from this love of God. You have an eternal, almighty Friend. And if God be for you, who can be against you? You may stand at last on the wreck of this world, smiling amidst its ruins, and lift a joyous eye upward to him who sits serene on the throne and manages the storm. He is the God whom you love, and who has pledged his irrevocable word, “I love them that love me.”

Ye who are conscious of no such affection,—who are not conscious of love, of gratitude, of delight in prayer, of an interest in the happiness and a regard for the honor of God or of a cheerful obedience to his commands,—do not doubt,—‘the love of God is *not* in you.’ Let it ring in your ear and echo in your heart,—‘the love of God is not in you.’ Let it occupy your imagination by day and by night,—let it meet you as in broad characters on every object,—let it come whispering in every breeze, mingle in every sound, and follow in the train of every thought,—‘the love of God is not in you.’ And if it do not arise in your heart, his love towards you, which is now melting in compassion, will soon be turned into wrath. O, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God! You will have no comforter in death, and in the day

of eternal retribution, none to be your friend ; no friend in heaven, for God you do not love ; no friend on earth, for it shall be burned up ; no friend in hell, for there are they who are hateful and hate one another. You may cast a wishful, imploring look on God, but it will be met with his frowns. He will say to you in a voice of thunder, "Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." And all heaven, all creatures, all the universe of God shall add Amen, for 'the love of God is not in you.'

## SERMON VIII.

GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND ON EARTH PEACE, GOOD-WILL  
TOWARDS MEN.—*LUKE 2: 14.*

THE annunciation of the Saviour's birth was made with joy. The circumstances of that event were all adapted to inspire the hearts of men with hope. An angel was sent from heaven to tell the news to the shepherds who were abiding in the field, and keeping watch over their flocks by night. The glory of the Lord shone around them. And, as they looked and trembled at this splendid and unwonted scene, the angel said unto them: "Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people. 'For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men!'"

It is therefore with feelings of peculiar interest that we come to inquire into the cause of this joyfulness, and to consider the purpose for which Christ came into the world. It seems very evident, that the healing of a few sick persons, or the inculcation of certain precepts of morality, could not have been sufficient to bring down a throng of angels singing such a song of exultation and love. It must be something far better, more general, and more astonishing than this, and is to be found in

the overtures that were made for the forgiveness of sin, the terms of forgiveness, and the inducement offered for its acceptance.

I. The overtures that were made for the forgiveness of sin.

No communication from heaven could have brought peace on earth, or manifested good-will towards men, which did not proclaim forgiveness of sin. While the burthen of guilt continued to rest heavily on the consciences of men, and they regarded God as offended, and doubted his willingness or ability to forgive, the proffers of a transient kindness would certainly fail to give peace to their minds and awaken emotions of heartfelt thankfulness. Every overture of seeming generosity would be to them, but like the tyrant's smile, scarcely less repulsive than his frown. What could it avail them, that he had sent a message with tidings of present good, or with power to confer a temporary happiness, while death was commissioned also to haste quickly on, and bear them away before the tribunal of the same God, to receive the rewards of his displeasure? Even the sublime revelation which brought immortality to light, must have been received with fearful apprehensions, unless the promise of the forgiveness of sin had given assurance, that immortality might be a blessing.

So deep, indeed, and indelible is the impression on the mind of every man, that he is a sinner against God, and obnoxious to punishment, that a long life of skepticism and irreligion is seldom able to remove it. The conscience which had slumbered perhaps for many years undisturbed, will often awake at the alarm of danger, and in the hour of death speak terribly of coming wrath. There are seasons, too, of peculiarly tender and pensive thoughtfulness, when the passions are hushed to a

momentary rest, and the soul seems to pause in its confused and aimless career, and nature is herself again,—and tells of him who has witnessed every misdeed, and observed every thought and purpose of the heart, and admonishes that he has a right to claim homage, and forewarns of a time when he is coming forth as a Judge, and calls for the consciousness of a preparation to meet him,—and then there is felt a misgiving within,—an unwelcome sensation of guilt,—and the man saddens with apprehension, and turns away for relief. O, it is idle, it is idle to attempt to suppress that inward admonition; for it is the voice of truth,—it is the voice of God. Again and again it must, it will be heard.

It is only a well-founded hope of a merciful pardon, that can afford any permanent peace. And this hope is a gift, which nothing earthly can bestow. I know not that forgiveness was ever inscribed on the heart of man, till written there by the pen of Inspiration. Nature, if we may so speak, in her original workmanship, seems never to have contemplated the introduction of sin, and to have made no provision for its forgiveness. The savage who grows up under nature's teaching, in the wilds of the forest, never forgives an enemy, or pardons an offence. He indulges no mercy, and he expects none in return. With him it is an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. With a stubborn fortitude, he prepares himself also to receive a full recompense for his own transgressions, from the Great Spirit whom he has offended. It was, indeed, something more than nature,—it was divine revelation, that taught us to pray, "Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us."

Philosophy, too, is here as ignorant as the child of the wil-

dermess, and as inadequate as the light of nature to dispel the darkness that gathers around a conscience burthened with guilt. The wisdom of the world is foolishness. Many of the ancient philosophers, who lived in the brightest days of eastern refinement and intelligence, inculcated the revolting doctrine that the soul of sinning man would be condemned at death to sink into the form of a brute, and pass from beast to beast, in punishment for sin, till purified and made fit for the society of heaven. Others, equally sagacious, and equally confounded in their reasoning, maintained that guilt could be washed away only by passing through a kind of purgatory ; and taught that every man must suffer a punishment proportioned to the nature and degree of his offence ; while one of the wisest and best of them all came at last, as the result of his reasonings, to the appalling conclusion, that a holy, just and impartial God *could not forgive sin,—could not forgive sin!* Would that he had both heard and believed the glad tidings, that, “Unto us a Saviour is born, who shall save his people from their sins.” He reasoned but too truly : for it is above and beyond all reasoning, that God can forgive sin.

It was to make provision for the forgiveness of sin, and to proclaim it to the world, that the Son of God came to us clothed in humanity. It was the overture that was made for the forgiveness of sins, that filled the angelic host with joy. They had seen Satan, one

“ Of the first,  
If not the first archangel, great in power,  
In favor and preëminence,”

lose all that favor and dignity by a single transgression, and fall, without the hope of restoration, into banishment and wo.

They saw, when man, seduced by Satan, dared to defy the threatenings of his Maker, and sinned against the love that blessed him; and they knew no way of reconciliation. They heard with admiration, when the voice of mercy first proclaimed forgiveness. It was news. It was news in heaven, that God could forgive sin. And when the promised Saviour appeared on earth, in the babe of Bethlehem, a multitude of the heavenly host came singing over the place where he was born, and filled all the air of midnight with their rapturous song: Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good-will towards men.

## II. The terms of forgiveness.

But it was not merely the offer of pardon that occasioned this expression of joy. The *terms* of forgiveness were no less a subject of rejoicing. When men have *presumed*, without a revelation, to hope for the recovery of favor with their God, it has commonly been at an awful sacrifice of personal dignity and present comfort. The various expedients that have been adopted to appease the supposed wrath of Heaven, are enough to fill our hearts with pain, and teach us at once the degradation of man, and the insufficiency of nature to afford him relief. All that is noble and generous and kind in the human soul has been prostituted, in a vain attempt to atone for transgression; and the poor conscience-stricken being has sunk himself still lower and lower in the depths of a false humiliation, with the shadowy hope of thereby recovering lost holiness and grandeur. Man has voluntarily inflicted upon himself almost the same curse that fell upon Babylon's proud and haughty king, when he was driven from the sons of men into the open field to be wet with the dews of heaven; and to feed on grass

with the ox ; as if to efface the last vestige of the Creator's image from the mind were the only way to regain his approving smiles. The tenderest ties of affection have been broken, and the mother has torn from her bosom her first-born child, and offered it in cruel sacrifice, in the wild and uncertain expectation, that with the blood of her offspring she might wash away the deep-stained guilt that polluted her heart.

Among more enlightened and cultivated people, means have been adopted less cruel, but as worthless and almost as debasing as these. A constant round of rites and ceremonies are performed, and man is foolishly persuaded to offer to the Infinite Spirit, in atonement for sin, those unmeaning services that are better fitted to amuse the vacant mind of childhood. So natural is it for our degraded nature to resort to forms and servile acts for the purpose of obtaining the forgiveness of sin, that Christianity itself has sometimes been made subservient to the same propensity. And we often find among ourselves, that men who have passed their lives without understanding or duly appreciating the proffers of the gospel, look around with dismay in the hour of danger, of sickness and death, for something they can do, some humiliating service they can perform, some sacrifice they can make, to satisfy the demands of a Sovereign they have so long disregarded, and to procure the pardon of their iniquity. They would now, in their impotence, by a kind of cringing and servility, by self-degradation, by offers of treasure they can no longer retain, by forced promises of future strictness, and an abject mockery of devotion, strive to win the approbation of that high and lofty One, whom they neglected and disobeyed in the days of their strength. They know not, for they have given no proper attention to the instructions of



the gospel, and nature could not teach them,—with what generosity God offers remission of sins to the sincere and the believing.

The angels who hovered around the birth-place of the Saviour must have known and rejoiced in the terms of forgiveness. They saw that man might now be disenthralled from the fears of superstition and the slavery of guilt, and go to his Father in heaven, with all the confidence and freedom of a simple-hearted child. They saw that God was in Christ Jesus reconciling the world unto himself. Help was laid upon one mighty to save. The Son of God had come to earth, not to publish forgiveness of sin upon terms of compromise, but to take away the curse of the law. He came to bow himself unto death on our account. He was to be made a curse for us. He was to bear our sins in his own body on the tree. He came to offer himself as “the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.” “He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself;” and there need be no more offering for sin.

The honor of God and the consistency of his government might now be secured, and the sins of men forgiven, and forgiven freely. Pardon, salvation, eternal life, was to be proclaimed to all who were willing, and only willing, to receive it. God was willing, without money and without price, without sacrifice and without penance, to be reconciled to all who were heartily willing to be reconciled to him. He would demand nothing but a believing, affectionate heart. He “so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son to die for it, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish but have everlasting life.”

We know that wherever Jesus afterward went, throughout

the cities and villages of Judea, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, his prominent doctrine was, "He that believeth shall be saved." "The Son of man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "I and my Father are one." "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." "Whosoever cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." "I am come to be the Saviour of sinners; put your trust in me; give me the sincere, affectionate confidence of your hearts; be my friends and followers, and I will forgive you,—forgive all, and forgive all freely,—for the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins,—you shall never perish, neither shall any pluck you out of my hands." And when he had finished the work which was given him to do, and was no longer to remain incarnate on the earth, before he took his triumphant flight to heaven, he sent his select disciples to publish abroad these glad tidings; "Go ye," was his last parting injunction, "go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth shall be saved." They went abroad, far and wide, and preached every where, as Paul did to the jailer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." "For by grace are ye saved through faith."

In faith, then, are comprised the terms of forgiveness. It is a cordial, affectionate reliance on the mercy of God in Christ Jesus,—a cheerful, heartfelt confidence, which cannot fail to excite our love, our gratitude, and make us humble, penitent and obedient,—a faith which the apostle says "works by love and purifies the heart."

In the terms of forgiveness, therefore, may be found another cause of rejoicing. Here is required no hard penance, no self-torture, no scrupulous and slavish performance of rites and ceremonies, no mean surrender of all that elevates man above the character of the brute, no painful and heart-withering seclusion from human society, no butchery of friends, none of those inhuman means of winning the favor of God which nature or unassisted reason has devised. The terms of forgiveness do not degrade, but ennoble our nature; do not debase, but purify and refine it. They require of us no exact, overstrained and solicitous services; but free us at once from the thralldom of sin and fear. They meet the wants of the old man grown grey in sin, as well as of the child who has just begun to feel the compunctions of guilt. They encourage the love of virtue in a long life of moral uprightness, and hold out a hope of renovation to the silent transgressor. The virtuous, the amiable disciple, John, found his salvation here, and here, in compliance with those terms, the thief on the cross obtained the forgiving promise, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Well might the angels sing with rapture, and well might all mankind unite in one universal chorus, and sing, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good-will towards men."

### III. The inducements offered for its acceptance.

But the joy thus occasioned by the overtures that were made for the forgiveness of sin, and the terms of forgiveness, may have been increased by a consideration of the peculiar motives offered for its acceptance. The interposition of God, by Christ, in behalf of sinners, presented a new motive to repentance and obedience. It made its appeal directly to the heart.

The threatenings of the law have continued, from its first transgression, to thunder terror in the ears of the impenitent. But it is not the nature of threatening or punishment to excite in the bosom of those who fear the one or suffer the other, a spirit of love and gratitude and tender repentance and generous concession towards him who threatens or inflicts the punishment. The most they can do is, to deter men from sin, alarm the sinner, and bring the guilty to consideration. They drive men to seek deliverance from suffering and danger: they do not soften and reform the heart. Go through our land, and visit our prisons and penitentiaries,—those abodes of vice and ignominy and wretchedness,—and say, on whom, of all the dark crowd of offenders, do you discover marks of sincere and thorough reformation? How seldom do you see the falling tear of contrition? How seldom do you hear the repentant sigh? Experiment has abundantly proved, that if you would reclaim the offender, and sacredly preserve the strictness and impartiality of justice, and the dignity of government, and spare not the rod of chastisement,—your unfeigned generosity and kindness must, at the same time, speak in thrilling, melting tones to the heart.

So spake, and so speaks the love and mercy of God in the gift of Messiah to our world. The strict integrity of his righteous law, the impartiality of his justice, and the honor and uprightness of his government must be inviolably maintained; and yet the poor, fallen, wandering sinner, was to be sought out, brought back, and saved from its wrath. “Mercy and truth met together, righteousness and peace embraced each other.” God must become incarnate, be manifest in the flesh, dwell among men, and, in the person of Jesus of Nazareth,

endure the penalty which man had incurred. Glory might thus remain to God, and peace be published on earth, goodwill to men,—the love of God flow out without restraint, and bathe, and sanctify the guilty. Here is the brightest, most hallowed spot in the history of the divine administration. Here is that mystery of mingled justice and mercy, which the Bible tells us angels study with delight, and are not yet able fully to understand.

In this manifestation of the goodness of God is presented a new and affecting motive to repentance and obedience. It appeals to all that is generous and grateful and tender in the constitution of man. It urges no constrained obedience,—it demands no sordid, selfish compliances,—it compels not by fear,—it allures not by bribe. But while heaven which is forfeited, still glitters upon us from far, and hell which is deserved, still sends up its terrific gleams, and the law which is violated, denounces against us, its curse, and the second death is pledged for our destruction, if we do not escape,—the glorious, compassionate God, in Christ Jesus, opens the sanctuary of his love, and bids us enter in and be at rest. He throws off the frowns of his indignation, and looks upon us with a paternal smile. He assures us that he is kind even to sinners. He speaks to us in the mildest tones, and bids us come to him as repentant children, and with believing hearts ask for that forgiveness, which he is most willing to grant. He has done that for man which astonishes angels around the throne. “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” This is a motive more powerful than the threatenings of the law,—more attractive than the splendor of heaven.

This, by the grace of God, has effected more for the moral renovation of man, than all other motives combined. Wherever the missionaries of religion have gone among the nations of the earth to reclaim the heathen from the servitude of sin, and bring them to repentance and obedience to God, the story of his love in the gift of his Son has been found the only motive that would reach their hearts. They preached to them of God in the creation and government of the world, and told them of the beauty and dignity of a virtuous life, but could not make them love and adore the one, or conform to the other. It was only when they heard of him, who came from heaven to earth to seek and to save that which was lost, and poured out his soul unto death on the cross, for such sinners as they, that the hearts of these heathen melted, and they bowed themselves to his dominion.

We need not, therefore, seek any further for the cause of that joy, which animated the song of the angels over the birth-place of Messiah. It is to be found in the overture that was made for the forgiveness of sin,—the terms of forgiveness,—and the inducements offered for its acceptance. This is indeed a sufficient cause, to fill the universe with songs of joy and praise. Spread it then, and let it reach every heart, and inspire every tongue, till

“ One song employs all nations ; and all cry  
Worthy the Lamb.”

Spread it, ye disciples of the Lord, while the song of the angels still echoes in your ears, and thrills through your hearts. Let parents tell it to their children, till their young hearts grow warm with love, and beat high with joy. Let friend talk of it

with friend, and neighbor with neighbor. Let the heralds of the gospel seize the standard of the cross, and hasten to all nations with the song of the angels inscribed in letters of light on their floating banners. Let the ministers of Christ not fail to proclaim it in the public assembly.

My hearers, God has sent his Son from heaven to die for you. He can forgive your sins,—he offers forgiveness freely to you,—to all who will receive it in a humble, repentant, affectionate faith; and he points you to Bethlehem, to Gethsemane, to Calvary, as the pledges of his love, and inducements to you to accept the proffered pardon. You are personally interested in his overture of mercy. “Unto you is born, in the city of David, a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.” To you are brought “glad tidings of great joy: for they shall be to all people.” Ye who have received in your hearts the offered forgiveness, forget not the song which it becomes you for ever to sing. And ye, who know not the joys of pardoned sin, will you not remember *why* the stillness of midnight was once broken by angelic notes over the plains of Bethlehem? If the threatened woes of hell have ceased to move you, and the riches of heaven are surpassed in charms by the riches of earth, will you not yet be affected by the loving-kindness of your God? Remember that when angels sinned, all with them was lost,—they were driven at once to the prison-house of despair,—no Saviour followed them, to die on their account,—no voice of mercy has been heard through the dark caverns of their dismal abode. But when man had sinned, *all was not lost*,—though you have sinned, all is not yet lost; your sins may be forgiven; you may yet secure all that Heaven can give.

Meanwhile the years seem hastening in their flight, and bearing us away to the full fruition of all that is offered, or to that land of darkness and pain, where mercy never comes and hope can visit us no more. You may look around you and look in vain for many who once heard with you, in the retirement of these walls, the "glad tidings of great joy." On the right and the left may be seen those whose whitening locks tell us that they linger but a little longer in these scenes. And could we borrow for a moment the eye of Omniscience, we might see others in the maturity of manhood and the freshness of youth, on whose front is inscribed with indelible lines, "This year thou shalt die!" Fellow-travellers to the tomb, be not dismayed! but forget not your end,—be not indifferent to the angel's song. It speaks. It speaks to you to-day, in a voice of forgiving love. To-morrow it may cease to vibrate on your ear. Listen, O listen, now. Believe—obey—and be for ever blest. Remember and forget not, I pray you, forget not the cause of the angel's song.



## SERMON IX.

WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?—MATTHEW 22: 42.

THERE was something so peculiar in this extraordinary personage, as often to excite the curiosity, and, at the same time, to confound the discernment of men. The degenerate Jews, who were anxiously expecting the advent of Messiah, but whose proud and perverted minds had mistaken the object of his mission, were ever in doubt how to regard him, were fluctuating in their opinions of him, and at variance among themselves in their estimation of his character. The works which he did, the manifest interpositions of Heaven that attended him, the dignity of his person and deportment, and the moral grandeur of his life, sometimes commanded their reverence, and compelled them to exclaim, "Of a truth, this is the Christ!" But again, the comparative meanness of his condition, and the obscurity of the place from which he proceeded, arose before their pride, and prompted them to ask, with contemptuous incredulity, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? Shall Christ come out of Galilee?" The scribes and Pharisees, who went out from Jerusalem, with the multitude, to witness his works, proclaimed that he had a devil, and that this was the secret of his seeming power. Herod the tetrarch, whose reproving conscience doubtless suggested the thought, said to his servants, "This is John the

Baptist ; he is risen from the dead. Some said he was Elias, others Jeremias, or one of the prophets. And there was much murmuring among the people because of him ; for some said, he is a good man ; others said, nay, but he deceiveth the people."

It was when the Pharisees had taken counsel how they might entangle him in his talk, that Jesus, after answering their captious inquiries with inimitable skill, proposed to them, in turn, the question, "What think ye of Christ? . Whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. He saith unto them : How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord saith unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If, then, David call him Lord, how is he his son?" And so perfectly ignorant were they of the true nature and character of Messiah, that these inquiries entirely confounded them. "And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions."

But he had scarcely finished his work of redemption, and ascended up into heaven, when his own professed disciples began to speculate upon his nature, and to dispute concerning his character. By the early Gnostics, he was represented as one of their supposed *æons*, which emanated from the original supreme divinity, like a ray of light sent out from the sun. Some have maintained that he was the supreme God himself, with only the assumed appearance of a man ; and others that he was the reason of God, dwelling in the son of Mary. By some he has been considered as a creature of the highest possible order, and only inferior to the Creator ; by others as the Son, literally begotten of the Father ; and by others, still,

as a mere man, of most excellent and extraordinary character. It would be useless, however, and burthensome, here to introduce more of these various and discordant theories. You have but to open the pages of history, and they will present you a view at which infidelity laughs, common sense is disgusted, and piety weeps.

Turning, therefore, from all these unsuccessful hypotheses, and utterly renouncing that pride of intellect which aims to be wise above what is written, let us come with a docile, humble disposition, and sit at the feet of Jesus, to receive instruction from his own mouth. Let us come to the representations of the Bible, and be satisfied to know simply what is there revealed concerning him whose sublime work on earth angels have not yet been able fully to understand.

I. From the scriptural account of him, we learn, in the first place, that *he was a man*,—strictly and properly a man. He had all the necessary properties of a man. He had the *physical* nature of a man. He was born a helpless infant, was folded in the arms of a Galilean peasant, and nurtured by her care. The child grew and increased in stature like other children, and was subject unto his parents. He needed to be fed and clothed; he ate and drank; he was susceptible of bodily pains, and suffered the pangs of hunger and thirst, of cold and heat. His exhausted limbs trembled and sunk under the burden of his own cross which he was compelled to bear; and when suspended upon it, he felt the natural fever of a dying body, and cried, “I thirst.” After his resurrection, he appeared in the midst of his disciples, with the scars of the wounds he had received; and to convince them of the reality of his personal presence, he challenged them to examine, to

handle him and see,—for, says he, “A spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have.”

He had also the *social* nature of a man. He did not appear among men as a being so highly exalted above them as to possess no kindred feelings ; nor with an air of repulsive dignity, that forbade every approach to his sympathies. As he grew in stature, he grew also in favor with man. He was beloved as a companion, and sought for as a guest. He mingled freely in the circles of men, was present at their weddings and their funerals, their assemblies and their feasts, and was a warmly greeted friend in the intimacies of domestic life. He sympathized most tenderly with Mary and Martha in the bereavement of their brother and his friend ; he wept at the grave of Lazarus ; and when writhing in the last agonies of death, with the weight of a whole world’s iniquity and punishment upon him, he beheld his attending, watching mother, with such feelings as a mother’s presence only could inspire, and commended her, in his dying breath, to the care and protection of that disciple whom he loved.

He had all the *sensibilities* of a man. The story of his long fasting in the wilderness, of his consequent hunger, and of the suggested temptation to force or reject the providence of God and work a miracle for his own relief, is not a senseless fiction,—a mere imposition on our ignorance and credulity. It was really so. “He himself hath suffered, being tempted.” “For it behoved him,” says the apostle, “to be made like unto his brethren.” “He was in all points tempted like as we are.” In the garden of Gethsemane, and in the near anticipation of his excruciating death on the cross, there is a most affecting development of human sensibility, as he began

to be sorrowful and exceeding heavy. "Then saith he unto his disciples, My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death : tarry ye here and watch." He turned aside from them to indulge his grief alone ; "and he went a little farther and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." Again he returns to his disciples,—again and again, in the restlessness of mental anguish, he leaves them to go away and pray in the same words. "And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly ; and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."

To Jesus belonged also the *intellectual* nature of a man. He increased, it is said, in wisdom, as well as in stature. He is here represented as a child, growing up like any other child, and gradually developing his intellectual faculties, as he advances in stature and in strength. In his common and most familiar intercourse with mankind, he seemed to think like a man, he reasoned like a man, he talked like a man.

He had, moreover, the *moral* nature of a man. Like other men, he possessed a conscience, a moral sense, which felt the distinction between good and bad, and whose dictates he always most sacredly obeyed. When he suffered that severe temptation in the wilderness, his conscience perceived, at once, the moral turpitude of the conduct proposed, and suggested to him the words of Scripture that were applicable to his case : "It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." He ever felt the obligations of strict conformity to all the divine commands, and was obedient even unto death. He worshipped and prayed and gave thanks, like a dependent moral being, like a holy man. "Father, I thank thee," was lan-

guage familiar to his lips ; he often blessed God, and when in the hour of his agony he prayed, an angel was sent in answer to his prayers, to give him relief, and to strengthen him.

Jesus, therefore, must be considered as a man. For he had all the properties, which constitute our complex idea of a man. If he did not really and truly possess a human nature, such as we possess, it would be impossible to identify or describe such a nature. It is true, indeed, he did not sin ; and if sinfulness were essential to the very being of a man, then must we renounce our natural relationship to the Son of God. Then must we break from all those tender sympathies, which we have just been weaving around the bosom of our Saviour. But, thanks be to divine Revelation, we know that sinfulness is not a necessary part of our nature. There did once live a joyous human pair, whose spirit was as pure as the air of Eden, who knew no sin, and felt not its degradation, till the destroyer came. And if there has been but one such,—one real, yet sinless man,—since the creation of our race, it is enough. It is enough ; we will not doubt it,—*Jesus is still a man.*

II. The same course of reasoning, by which we have now proved that Jesus Christ was strictly and properly man, will also prove, that *he is strictly and properly God.* It is the simple and natural process of induction. We know nothing of any object in nature, except by those properties, by which it is exhibited to us. When we have satisfactorily ascertained that all the known properties of one object are the same with all the known properties of another, we naturally and philosophically infer, that the objects themselves are the same or alike. It is in this way that the American

philosopher discovered and proved, that lightning, which flashes harmlessly in the evening cloud, or darts with a scathful impetuosity to the ground, is the same with the electric spark, that may be elicited from almost every object around us. It is in this way that another philosopher has ascertained, that the river which rises in the mountain's side, and hurries downward to the ocean, follows, in its movement, the same law of motion with yon faintly-beaming planet. In this way we have been induced to believe, that Jesus was really and truly man; and in this way we are led to believe that he is really and truly God.

He has all the known properties of God. The Bible, which is the only authority on this point that we are allowed to acknowledge, represents him as the *eternal, immutable, omnipresent, omniscient, exalted and adorable* Being, who created and sustains the worlds. And this is all that we know of God. This is God.

Jesus Christ is *eternal* and *immutable*. "He is before all things," says the apostle.—"Who through the *eternal* Spirit offered himself without spot unto God." "I am Alpha and Omega," says Christ himself, "the beginning and the end, the first and the last." "Jesus Christ, the *same* yesterday, to-day, and for ever." He is *omnipresent*. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them," is the cheering promise left to his praying disciples. It is spoken without any limitation. It is a promise to the distant inhabitant of New Zealand, that is almost lost beyond our reach in the Southern Ocean, and to the opposite Greenlander, who is shut out from our society by long night and the eternal ice in which he is surrounded. It is a promise to the Hotten-

tot and to the Esquimaux,—to the unvisited tribes of Ethiopian deserts and to us. Wherever two or three are gathered together in his name, there is the omnipresent Jesus in the midst of them. He is *omniscient*. “He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man; for he knew what was in man.” “Come,” says the woman of Samaria, in astonishment, as she ran from his presence to her friends, “come, see a man who told me all things that ever I did.” “Lord, thou knowest all things,” says the disciple Peter. “Now we are sure,” is the united testimony of all his disciples, “that thou knowest all things.” “As the Father knoweth me,” is his own most solemn affirmation, “so know I the Father.” What then is omniscience, if this be not? “Who can by searching find out God? who can find out the Almighty to perfection?” Yet Jesus declares, in unequivocal terms, that he knows the omniscient God, even as God knoweth his own Son. He is *omnipotent*. He speaks of himself as possessing all power in heaven and in earth. When he wrought such miracles as infidelity itself was obliged to confess no man could do except God were with him, he performed them, as God, in his own name and in his own strength. Paul or Peter, in dependence on his Master, might say to the diseased, “In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, rise up and walk.” But Jesus himself, in his own dependence, utters the omnipotent word, “Damsel, I say unto thee, arise;” “Lazarus, come forth;” “Peace, be still;” and even the dead obey his voice,—the boisterous waves grow calm at his command. He is *supremely exalted*. The apostle congratulates the Jews, that of their fathers, “as concerning the flesh, Christ came,—who is *over all*, God blessed for ever.” In his last and most affecting interview with his



disciples before his death, he promised to send them the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost. "Howbeit," says he, "when he is come, he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak. He shall glorify me ; for he shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine ; therefore said I, he shall take of mine and shall show it unto you." If the Father, in his peculiar relation, is sometimes spoken of as superior to the Son, the Son is here spoken of as equal with the Father, and superior to the Holy Ghost. He is an object of prayer and *adoration*. "When Jehovah bringeth his first-begotten into the world, he saith, Let all the angels of God worship him." The epistles of the New Testament are very generally inscribed to those who call on the name of Christ ; and a distinguished heathen writer has testified that the primitive Christians were accustomed to come together and sing praises to Christ as to God. The dying martyr, in full view of eternity, saw the heavens opened, and being filled with the Holy Ghost, prayed and commended his departing spirit to the Lord Jesus. He it is that *created and sustains the worlds*. "All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made." "Being the brightness of his (Father's) glory, and *upholding* all things." "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers ; all things were created by him and for him." "He was before all things, and by him all things consist." This is the express, unequivocal language of the Bible ; and doubtless you must accord with the apostle, when he said,

that "every house is builded by some man, but he that built all things is God."

We have here but a specimen of the mode of reasoning which has been adopted in relation to this subject. To fill up the argument might swell the discourse into an extensive volume. The mere specimen, however, may be sufficient to convince us, that Jesus Christ, though really man, is also God, that "in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." The true Baconian philosopher, who would bind himself strictly to facts, and follow that simple method of induction, which has made such wonderful discoveries in the science of earth and sky, cannot, I think, avoid the conclusion, that Jesus is man, and Jesus is God. For he has all the qualities and the attributes of both. He has all that we know, or can know of either.

III. Following the same simple, yet exact method of inquiry, and binding ourselves fast to the facts and declarations of the Bible, from which alone any knowledge of Messiah can be obtained,—we shall be led, in the third place, to believe that *these two natures, the human and the divine, were not merely co-existent, but combined, and so blended in the person of Christ, as to constitute but one individual being.* The Bible never makes any distinction between Jesus the man, and Jesus the God. It always speaks of him in the same general way, in which we are accustomed to speak of ourselves, who are also composed of two different natures,—the physical and the spiritual. We are wont to say, without the least apprehension of being misunderstood, or supposed to speak inconsistently and contradictorily, that the man eats and drinks,—and the man thinks and loves or hates ;—the man is sick,—

and the man reasons and hopes ;—the child grows, and the child learns ;—the man is dead, and the man is alive. We know it is not the soul that eats and drinks, that grows in bulk, or wastes away with disease. We know it is not the body that thinks and reasons, loves and hopes. But we readily understand these terms, as predicated of the whole man ; for body and soul constitute but one individual person. Throughout the representations of the Bible, Jesus Christ is spoken of, and speaks of himself, in the same manner. Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea ; and Jesus was before all things,—before Bethlehem of Judea or this world existed. Jesus was born ages after the patriarch Abraham had been reposing in death ; and yet he says to the Jews, “Before Abraham was, I am.” Jesus was a weak, helpless, dependent infant ; and Jesus had all power in heaven and in earth. On one occasion, at least, he confessed his ignorance ; and at another time he declared, without any qualification, that he knew even Omniscience itself. Now he is cradled in a manger, and now he assures his disciples, that he will be with them in every part of the world. He labored in the slow and toilsome operation of a mechanic’s craft, and he created all worlds by the word of his power. Now he is sleeping, in the hinder part of a ship ; his disciples disturb his slumbers and awake him from his lethargy : and now, as he speaks but a word to the winds and the waves, the furious tempest is hushed, the billows sink down at his feet, and nature is calm at the presence and the voice of her God.

This combination, mysterious as it is, is in perfect accordance with nature. The view we have taken of it, from Scripture, is illustrated and sustained by analogy. In every

being around us, we may observe a similar combination. Look you at the simple mass of inanimate matter that composes the soil on which we tread. It has all the properties of a material object ; but it has not life. Look again,—and by an unaccountable process of vegetation, it is transformed into a growing plant,—you see it fresh and fragrant and blooming, in the rose. It has lost none of its former properties,—nothing essential to the nature of matter ; but a vegetable nature is mysteriously superadded. Follow it still farther,—and now it becomes really sensitive,—it moves by its own power,—it walks before you, a living animal rejoicing in its strength. It has not been deprived, in this transformation, either of a material or a vegetable nature,—it has still the essential properties of both ;—it is nourished, it grows, it comes to maturity, and it decays,—it sinks again into its primitive clod of earth ;—but animal life has been given to it, an animal nature has been strangely combined with it. Nor does this mass of matter, this vegetating, self-moving animal, lose any of its necessary properties by becoming again united and blended with an intellectual or moral nature ; so united and blended as to constitute one individual being,—an immortal man. And why may not the process be continued, through all orders, up to him who gives life and form to all things ? If the physical nature of a beast may be combined, as it certainly is, with the spiritual nature of a man, why may not the nature of a man be combined with the nature of an angel, of a seraph, or of God ?

But it is urged, as an objection to this supposed combination of the human and the divine natures in the person of Christ, that he suffered death. God, it is said, the eternal, immortal Spirit, could not die ; and hence it is inferred, that he who

bowed his head on the cross, and gave up the ghost, could not have possessed the nature of the Godhead. But what, it may be asked, what is death? What is it for a man to die? Does *his* immortal spirit die? Or is it absurd to suppose that man has an immortal spirit, because he is subject to death? When we view that tragic scene, which lays the noblest form in ruins, must we go away, with the chilling conclusion, that this fallen mansion never possessed an immortal inhabitant? Is it only animal nature that dies? Is the death of a man as the death of a beast,—as the death of a plant? O, it is not for living men to say precisely what it is to die. This only we know; that as the soul must live for ever, death is but a dissolution,—or awful sundering of soul and body. Such, too, was the death of Christ,—a dissolution without a parallel,—a dissolution that shook the world, disturbed the sun in his course, and almost wrecked the earth on which he died. It is not absurd, it is not impious to say it,—there is a sense in which *the death of Christ was the death of God!*

Reason may here stand confounded and amazed; but let her not utter one skeptical word. The character of Christ, even to his death, is in perfect accordance with nature. It is simple, consistent, affecting, sublime. Let not a bold and distrustful philosophy lay upon it her scrutinizing hand. It is too holy, too sacred, too peculiar. It must not be profaned by an impertinent curiosity. If he, who put forth an irreverent hand to sustain the ark of God, was smitten for his presumption, well may we shrink from an attempt to lay open the very mysteries of his nature. It was never intended that a finite creature should comprehend the being of his infinite Creator.

Enough only is revealed to claim our love, our confidence, our adoration. The representations of the Bible are plain. "Thus far shalt thou come and no farther." Jesus is man, and Jesus is God, and these two natures are combined and blended into one individual being.

I may now indulge but a single reflection. This Being, who stands forth as the Saviour of the world, is admirably adapted to the wants of frail, sinful, yet immortal man. He brings the glory of the Godhead down to earth, mingled and softened with the sympathies of our nature. You may here gaze upon it with an undazzled eye. The Divinity is not faintly reflected from another and a separate object, but has bowed itself to our horizon, and sheds a bright, but mild, cheering light over all around us. The infinite Spirit might seem too vast for our feeble conception, too refined and elevated for our approach. But Jesus has embodied it in the person of a man, and bids us draw near, without dread and without reserve, as to our friend, our companion, our brother. We might well be oppressed, abashed, and stricken with the consciousness of guilt, but he is our daysman, standing between us and the avenger's throne, uniting in himself the dignity of God, and the sensibilities of man. He can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and he is almighty to save.

Poor, guilty, burthened, anxious, helpless, sorrowing sinner! is not this the Saviour whom you need? There is none like him in all the universe of God,—so powerful, and yet so kind, —mighty as Jehovah, and yet meek and humble as a feeble fellow-man. Look unto him, and live for ever. He smiles upon you, and bids you welcome. He weeps over you, and

entreats you to come. O, flee not, turn not, stay not, look not away from his love. He calls, he calls to you to-day. Listen and obey. Believe, and be at rest.

Christians! you cannot love him too much, nor confide in him too firmly. There is no pain you endure, but he has felt the same. There is no temptation you feel, but he has suffered the like. There is no sorrow that wrings your heart, but finds a sympathetic chord in his bosom. No cloud of adversity passes over you, but sends its shade across the brow of Jesus. He sits, as your intercessor, on his Father's throne, and at his right hand. The glories of heaven encircle him. Angels and principalities, dominions and powers bow before him. The universe moves at his command. Christian, behold, this is your Saviour! The love you bear him will be more than reciprocated. The faith you repose in him cannot be disappointed. He feels for you as man,—he will live and bless you as God. You need not be distracted or divided in your thoughts and affections between the two; for both are one. O, for a heart to love and to praise him like the redeemed in heaven! Give him your whole soul while you live, and let your last expiring breath go out in the prayer of the dying Stephen, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!"

## SERMON X.

NOW, THE GOD OF HOPE FILL YOU WITH ALL JOY AND PEACE IN BELIEVING, THAT YE ABOUND IN HOPE, THROUGH THE POWER OF THE HOLY GHOST.—ROMANS 15: 13.

THIS benediction, which the apostle uttered in the closing part of his epistle to the Romans, expresses a desire, that God would bless them, and make them holy and happy, through the agency of the Holy Ghost.

It was the office of the Holy Ghost to inspire the prophets and apostles, to make revelations to their minds, and to bestow upon them miraculous gifts. Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The apostles were all filled with the Holy Ghost, when, on the day of Pentecost, they began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. The text implies, that it is also the office of the Holy Ghost, in a less extraordinary manner, to influence the thoughts and affections of men, and to inspire their hearts with faith, joy, hope and peace.

That God may, and often does exert an influence on the minds of men, is apparently taught both by nature and revelation. It has been practically admitted by all people, in every age. The whole system of heathen mythology proceeds upon this supposition. That very enthusiasm and extravagance, and those wild pretensions, which have so often brought



the doctrine of divine influence into disrepute, indicate that it has its foundation in nature. And there is, perhaps, scarcely any one, either pagan or Christian, who has not at some time felt himself prompted to send up a kind of prayer for communications from above.

It is certain that the doctrine of divine influence was fully and decidedly inculcated by the ancient philosophers. Plato taught that virtue does not proceed from nature, or from education, but from a divine power. Seneca maintained that God dwells in every good man. Cicero declared that no one was ever good or great without divine assistance and inspiration; and Pliny, that virtue is the gift of the gods. And another, in accordance with this sentiment, relates of an illustrious Roman general, that he never undertook any thing without first sitting a very long time in the chapel of Jupiter; as if to receive from thence a divine mind and salutary instructions.

The doctrine, in its proper form, is not without support from reason. The plainest reasonings lead us to the supposition, that he who made this world and all it contains, with so much apparent skill and design, even in its minutest objects, cannot have left any part of it without his care and control; and least of all, that most important part, the human soul, for which all the rest was created. It is reasonable to suppose, that he, who has made intelligent, moral beings, would guide and move them at his pleasure. It is reasonable to believe that he, whom nature, as well as revelation, teaches us to regard as our father, would not withhold from us a father's influence. The belief of the being of God would be, otherwise, in respect to our present good, of scarcely any practical

importance. There would be no communion of soul with him. We could not turn to him as our friend, when our minds were perplexed, and our hearts troubled, if we had no hope that he would tranquilize our souls. The propensity we feel, to seek the favor of an unseen and superior power, would be repressed. Our noblest and best feelings would be chilled ; and a principle would remain in our nature, which reason could not account for.

But it is clearly and abundantly made known to us in the Bible, that God does exert a moral influence upon his moral creatures. It was understood with greater or less clearness by the patriarchs and prophets. David prayed, in the bitter consciousness of guilt, "Create within me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation ; and uphold me with thy free Spirit." It was one of the proverbs of Solomon, that "the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord : as the rivers of water, he turneth it whithersoever he will." When God foretold, by Ezekiel, to the dispersed Jews, that he would gather them from all countries, and restore them to their own land, he gave them a promise that he would change their hearts. "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you ; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them."

There are some passages, however, in the more recent prophecies, which intimate that this truth was to be more fully disclosed, and the influences of the Spirit of God more extensively bestowed, under the dispensation of the coming Messiah.

"And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh." Peter referred to this passage, as having its fulfilment on the day of Pentecost, when the apostles spake in foreign tongues, and there were added unto the little number of disciples about three thousand souls. The gift of the Holy Spirit, in a preëminent degree, is represented as one of the distinguishing blessings of the gospel. It is therefore in the New Testament, that we are to look for the most frequent mention of it. And accordingly, we can scarcely open a page in the writings of the apostles, without finding some reference to the influence of the Spirit of God. Paul speaks of it as a thing understood and acknowledged by every believer. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God ; and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you ?" "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." "I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ; that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man ; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith ; and that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth and length and depth and height ; and to know the love of God which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled with all the fulness of God."

Something more was evidently intended by these passages than the mere natural efficacy of truth unapplied by any superhuman power. The doctrine of a real direct influence from God was both taught in the received systems of philosophy, and was current among the people in the time of Christ and his apostles ; and they certainly would not have used language calculated to confirm a prevailing error. The frequent allusion

that is made in the New Testament to the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Ghost, and the power of God in the hearts of men, would, to say the least, be very useless and unnatural, if nothing else was to be expressed by such reference, than the simple fact told in other forms, that Scripture truth was originally communicated by the Spirit of God. The Bible speaks of the truth, and of the Spirit too, and sometimes in the same verse, with a distinction that need not be misunderstood. For our gospel, says the apostle, came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost. "We are bound to give thanks to God always for you, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth, through the Spirit." It was when the apostle had put forth all his eloquence, and ardor of soul, and strength of mind, in proclaiming and enforcing the truth, that in the close of his epistles, as if he could do no more, he usually gave free utterance to the benevolence of his heart in such a prayer as that contained in the text; "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost." "Now the God of peace make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight."

The fact, therefore, that God is pleased, by direct communications of his Spirit, to affect the minds of men, may not be questioned by those who will listen to the unperverted and simplest dictates of their own nature, or the plain and often-repeated declarations of the word of God.

But of the *manner* in which this influence is exerted, or

how the divine Spirit acts upon the hearts of men, we have no knowledge, and must necessarily remain in ignorance, till that which is in part is done away, and we are permitted to see as we are seen, and know as we are known. Our understandings are adapted to the situation in which God has placed us ; but we have no power to perceive, and no means to ascertain, how mind is connected with the material world and affected by its objects ; nor how one created mind acts upon another ; and still less how the Infinite, Uncreated Mind may act upon any of the myriads of minds he has called into being by a word.

The mind of man, like the Spirit that made it, is manifested to our senses only by its effects. We can neither touch, nor see, nor hear it. Its secret springs always elude our search. Our attempts to investigate the manner in which its character may be changed by the power of God, are as idle and unwise, as the labors of the alchemist in pursuit of something which will turn every thing to gold,—who wastes his estate and consumes himself at the fire that is kept always burning, while he searches and searches, and is destined never to find. The declaration of our Saviour is as true and forcible at this moment, and the illustration of it as pertinent too, as when first given to the inquisitive Pharisee at Jerusalem: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth ; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." The philosophy of eighteen hundred years, in all the pride of her achievements, has not yet been able to discover the invariable laws of the wind, or to account with certainty for all its varying movements. And a captious and disputatious theology, unheeding the positive declaration

of him who knew what was in man, has been equally unsuccessful in attempting to discover the manner in which the Spirit quickeneth whom he will. We only know that the most opposite theories are equally false. Their advocates, disregarding the strong but diverse metaphorical language of the Bible, have neither proved that the soul of man when born of the Spirit is literally created anew, nor that he is merely persuaded by argument and motive. The human mind is influenced not only by motive in the proper signification of that word, but by the tones of voice, the glance of an eye, by the inarticulate notes of music, by sympathy, by the air we breathe, affecting the medium of thought, by disease of the body, softening and subduing or irritating the spirit, and by causes which we are not able to detect. And who shall here limit the knowledge and power of the Infinite? He who made the delicate and ethereal machinery of the human soul, may touch its springs, as he will, and move it at his pleasure, —he may breathe upon its chords and make them harmonious to his praise.

We have reason, however, to believe, that the influence of the Holy Spirit on the minds of men does not interfere with the laws of their constitution, or do violence to their nature. The character and government of God seem pledged to sustain the principles he has established. He does not interrupt or suspend the laws of nature, unless, for some special purpose, he would make a striking and imposing *display* of his power and immediate agency, in those stupendous events which we have termed miracles. The operations of his Spirit are always silent and unobserved. They gently heal the disorders of the soul, and restore it to health and happiness.

They first inspire it with the love of God, and then gradually sanctify it,—transforming it more and more into his image.

No man can tell, from his own consciousness, with positive certainty, when or how the heavenly Comforter moves upon his heart,—he receives no new faculty,—he experiences no violence,—he suffers no force. If the soul were forcibly changed, there would be no occasion for those afflictions which the Christian must endure, the painful discipline he must undergo, the chastisements of his Father's rod that must be inflicted upon him, to make him a partaker of his Father's holiness. It is because the laws of his nature are not to be broken, even by the Spirit, that it must needs be that he is now so often in heaviness. It is because the influences of the Spirit act in such perfect accordance with the constitution of our minds, and without violence, that the Spirit may be resisted, his burning love may be quenched, he may be grieved away ; and we are admonished, as on the responsibility of our own powers, not to resist the Holy Ghost.

With this fact fully and comfortably settled in our minds, we ought to rest satisfied in regard to the mode of the Spirit's operations ; and carefully to suppress that restless and proud curiosity which strives still to be wise above what is written ; and sacredly to avoid those perplexing disputations which do but engender strife,—which drive the Spirit from our hearts, while we are contending about the manner in which he may purify them, and leave us in darkness and sorrow and sin, till we are compelled to come down from our height of pretended wisdom, and like the humbled Job, confess in contrition, " I have uttered that I understood not ; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not." It is enough for us, that the cheering

truth has been revealed to us from heaven, that the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, and draweth the soul to God by a sweetly constraining efficacy. It is enough that we may rely upon the blessed Comforter with confidence and hope, and turn to our heavenly Father, in the assurance that earthly parents are not more ready to give good gifts unto their children, than he is to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him. It is not necessary that we should know more. We are daily receiving influences we do not comprehend, and which would not be more salutary, if we were able to discern their secret operation. The peasant might, indeed, receive a transient gratification, could he perceive how the air that surrounds him sustains his life. But would he breathe more freely, or inhale more health? We need only to open our hearts to receive the influence that cometh from above, and be assured that it has a life-giving power.

But though the manner in which the Spirit of God affects the hearts of men is unknown to us, the importance of this influence is not the less real, and our belief of it not the less practical. It is the foundation of prayer, and of all direct communication between God and the soul. We could not go to him in prayer, if we had no expectation that he would bestow upon us the blessings we asked. The language of our devotions would be, to a great extent, unmeaning and absurd, if we did not expect an influence would come down upon us, in answer to our supplications, giving strength to our holiest resolutions and encouraging our virtue,—confirming our faith, warming our love, purifying us from sin, and softening and subduing the soul. It would be impious for us to come together from Sabbath to Sabbath in the sanctuary of the Lord, and



solemnly ask him for spiritual blessings, if we had no confidence that he would exert upon us a spiritual influence. Unbelief or skepticism here shuts out God from the breast, and places us at a dark and awful distance from his throne. No wonder that they do not love to pray, who have no hope of obtaining the object of their prayer. No wonder that they should regard the frequent prayers of the pious Christian as weak-minded, enthusiastic and superstitious, or hypocritical and austere, who indulge no belief that the Infinite Spirit will condescend to hold intercourse with the spirits he has made.

More especially is the importance of divine influence manifested in converting men from sin, and inspiring them with the first emotions and purposes of holiness. No one of all the human race who have sinned, ever came to repentance without receiving an influence from above. "Except a man be born of the Spirit," said the Saviour, "he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." The disciple John assures us, that they who received Christ, were "born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." The apostle Paul always ascribed to a divine agency his own conversion, and that of his associates and fellow-Christians. "God," says he, "who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." The sigh of penitence was never heard, the tear of contrition never fell, without the moving energies of the Holy Spirit. It is he that convinceth the world of sin. It is he that won the hearts of the patriarchs and prophets,—of Abraham and Moses, of David and Isaiah,—and subdued them unto God. It is he that drew the fishermen of Galilee around their holy Master, and

fired them with zeal in his cause. It is he that has gathered together the redeemed in heaven, from every people and kindred and nation on the earth, and tuned their hearts to that song which they unceasingly sing. It is he who has moved in the breasts of all, in every age and every land, who ever melted in sorrow for sin, or glowed with love to God, even though they perceived not his power, and knew not his presence ; or like the first disciples at Ephesus, they “ had not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.”

And when repenting man has turned from the broad way of sin, into the narrow path that leads to life, the same divine agency still conducts him on to the end. Jesus prayed to the Father for his disciples, that he would sanctify them. The apostles continually refer the growing holiness of Christians to the Holy Spirit. ‘ The Spirit witnesses with their spirit, that they are the sons of God. They are led by the Spirit,—live in the Spirit,—walk in the Spirit,—are filled with the Spirit,—are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,—are strengthened with all might by the Spirit,—and kept by the mighty power of God through faith unto salvation. They are washed, they are sanctified, they are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit of our God.’ He sustains them in all their struggles with sin, and conflicts with appetite and passion and selfish attachment to the world. He is with them, when in the hour of temptation they are almost driven to make shipwreck of their faith, and kindly rescues them from the powers that would otherwise overwhelm them. He, by his all-pervading energies, is even now with each one of the little army of praying disciples, who, scattered among the people of earth, are ‘ working out their salvation with fear and trembling,

while God worketh in them both to will and do of his good pleasure.' He is even now helping on many an obscure saint in his unobserved and toilsome pilgrimage to heaven.

But the importance of the influence of the Spirit of God is, perhaps, more strikingly manifest, when we look upon the mass of the world and take the Bible by the side of it, and read the clear promises respecting the ultimate prevalence of truth and righteousness, and consider, that of all the millions whose minds are now darkened and degraded by ignorance and superstition and vice, no one will ever be enlightened and reformed but by the Spirit, and no one, in the language of the beloved disciple, will ever "say that Jesus is the Christ, but by the Holy Ghost." His work seems but just begun. He is yet to change every heart, and make a temple of every breast. He is yet to enter the bosom of the poor islander, who has almost lost the spirit and the intellect of man, and of the wild savage in the forest, scarcely superior in mind to the beast he hunts for his prey, and of the roaming Tartar that knows no home on earth, and seeks for none in heaven. The wings of the heavenly Dove are yet to overshadow the burning plains of Africa, and rest on the wintry winds of Siberian deserts. His presence is to make the habitations of cruelty the abodes of peace and love. The whole earth is to become the garden of the Lord, and all its inhabitants are to dwell together as his children,—every eye turned in gratitude and confidence towards his throne,—every tongue speaking the same voice of praise,—and all hearts bound, in pure and hallowed affection, to one another and to God.

As this glorious work advances, there is reason to believe that the Holy Spirit will be more honored and confided in.

God, as the Father of his creatures, has been extolled,—in word, if not in heart,—and poets have sung, with sweet sentimentality, of him who came down from heaven to dwell with man, and placed himself in the sinner's stead ; but the Holy Spirit has scarcely been honored in speech or in song. The world have turned from him with infidel disregard ; and many who seem to be warm-hearted believers, as if with the mistaken apprehension, that his influence does, in some way, do violence to the laws of man's nature and impair his freedom, have but hesitatingly and coldly acknowledged the Spirit's power. But as he goes on in his silent work, triumphing over the human heart, and over the prince of darkness, his agency must be more and more perceived, and more and more admired. The missionary, going forth with the full conviction, that neither he that planteth is any thing, nor he that watereth any thing, and relying on the unseen Spirit, will see, with wonder, nation after nation, yielding to his sway. The world will feel his influence and turn to him, with grateful adoration and with prayers. Hail to that day, when Christians, instead of disputing one with another about the manner in which the Spirit's influence is exerted upon them, shall be found uniting heart with heart, in simple, earnest, believing supplication, that the blessed Comforter will come down and work as he will, and inspire their souls with his love ! Hail to that day when he, whom the Bible reveals as the Being that is to convert the world shall be welcomed by millions of adoring hearts to his work on earth !

My hearers, let us open our bosoms and welcome him there. Descend, O holy Dove ! descend ! Let us not forget to acknowledge his power. Surely they need not be told of its

worth, who know what it is to struggle alone with sin, and find themselves vanquished in the conflict. They cannot fail to appreciate it, who have often exhausted their own energies in trying to win the hearts of their children and friends unto God, and have felt that they could do no more, but turn from them and pray. They cannot but prize it, who have long stood not far from the kingdom of heaven, and have not yet found heart to enter. Let those rejoice in it who weep for the desolations of Zion. Let no one speak lightly or think irreverently of the Spirit. For there is a sin that hath never forgiveness, neither in this world, nor in the world to come,—and that sin is a sin against the Holy Ghost.

## SERMON XI.

IF ANY MAN BE IN CHRIST, HE IS A NEW CREATURE.—2 CORINTHIANS 5: 17.

THOSE who are accustomed to observe the changes of human character, will not be startled with the boldness of this assertion. The views, feelings and purposes of men are ever changing with time and circumstance. There is a wide difference of character, as well as of appearance, between the child gaily sporting in the nursery, and the old man bending tremulously over his staff; between the rash, unsuspecting youth, and the man grown wary in the school of experience; between him who only revels in the scenery of a young imagination, and him who has long buffeted the storms and suffered the disappointments of real life. The adventurer who early left his father's house, returns home after years of wandering, to gaze and be gazed upon as a stranger among those who shared with him the pastimes of his boyhood. This change, though commonly gradual, is always certain, and sometimes it is so great and striking, that the mere prattle of the village will tell us, that such an one is *entirely altered, you would scarcely know him; he is another man.*

But the Bible, in many places and various language, speaks of a change far greater, deeper, and more radical than this. "If any man be in Christ, he is a *new creature*;" or as the former phrase implies, if any man be a Christian, a true dis-

ciple of Christ, he is a new creature. In some passages, the same change is spoken of as a resurrection from the dead : "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Again, it is represented as a new birth : "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." And in the epistle from which the text is taken, the apostle, alluding to the original creation of the world, uses this strong and vivid language of comparison : "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

It is obvious that the texts just cited are too various in their phraseology to be interpreted literally ; and the last is too specific to mean any thing else than an internal, moral change. No man surely, can be said, in the same literal sense, to be born again, to be raised from the dead, and to be created anew. But it is equally obvious, that the expressions here used are too strong to denote any ordinary, superficial change. For where, in the compass of language, can terms be found to express a greater and more complete renovation, than a new birth, a resurrection from the dead, a new creation ?

It is not designed, at present, to call your attention to the universal necessity of such a change, to point you to the power and means by which it is produced, or to mark with accuracy the greatness of its extent ; but simply to consider, in brief, its nature, to describe, as I am able, some of the *distinguishing traits of the Christian character*.

Perhaps, from the circle of your acquaintance, you will now call to mind some one, who is thought to be a disciple of the meek and lowly Jesus, and who seems to be the subject of

a change not unlike that which the text represents. You knew him when earth was his only paradise, and this world the scene of his brightest hopes ; when he loved to talk in careless pleasantry of the scrupulous fears of the conscientious, and the supposed gloominess, and the misanthropic, hypocritical austerity of the religious ; when his pride swelled high at every personal indignity ; and when all his calm, sober thoughts were occupied in the business of worldly comfort and aggrandizement. You know him now ; but he is not what he then was. His countenance is indeed the same, but another spirit informs it ; his emotions are similar, but something new controls them ; his faculties are not changed, but they are differently directed ; his worldly condition may be much the same, but he regards it with different feelings, he views it with a different eye ; he seems to breathe another atmosphere, and to hold communion with other beings. Come, then, with me, and let us enter the secret chambers of his soul ; let us watch the springs of action and discover, if we can, some of the principles which are imperceptibly working this change.

I. In the first place, we find, that he has *peculiar affections towards God*. The existence of the Supreme Being, the Creator and the Preserver of all things, he never denied ; it is a fact too apparent to be really disbelieved by any. The little child no sooner begins to notice the different forms of nature, than it asks, with admirable simplicity, “ Who made the trees ? who made the sun ? who made me ? ” But the answer, which every honest, reflecting mind must give,—that it is God,—while it astonishes and commands assent, does not always affect the heart. The idea is too vast to be fully comprehended, and too vague to make a distinct and deep impres-



sion. The world is present, but God seems to be far off. Surrounding objects are attractive, but the idea of the constant superintendence of this invisible Being has no charms.

The Christian now tells us, that in this respect his mind is altered. What once was dark and confused, has become comparatively clear and distinct; what once seemed like a passing dream, is now a constant reality. He walks forth in the field and the solitary place, and God is there. He mingles in the busy crowd of men, and God is there. He lies down in the darkness of night, and while every earthly object is lost to his eye, God is still present to his mind. He prays, and does not feel as he once did, that, in this act, he is speaking idle words to the empty air; he does not feel that he is uttering sounds to be borne through unknown space and lost, ere they reach the ear of Jehovah; but, in the expressive language of Scripture, he draws nigh to God, and God draws nigh to him. Not a word is pronounced, but God hears it; not a thought is breathed, but his ear gathers it up; not an emotion is felt, but it rises to the sympathies of his heart.

It is this absorbing sense of the universal presence of God which constitutes, in part, one of the peculiarities of the Christian. But as we enter still more deeply into his feelings, and watch with careful discrimination the expressions of his soul, we perceive, also, that he has peculiar love towards God. When his thoughts were wont to move sportively over the objects of sense, and his imagination was delighted in sketching scenes of earthly bliss on the curtain of futurity, a vague notion of God sometimes came across his mind, and he almost felt that he then loved the majestic Being, whom in truth he scarcely knew. That view of God's sovereignty, justice, holi

ness and immutable opposition to every thing sinful, which at times forced itself upon his notice, as necessary to the perfection of the divine character, he fondly hoped was a distorted image. It did not occur to him, that a cold approbation, or even a pleasing admiration of some of the *qualities* of a being is a very different thing from a heart-felt love of that being. It did not occur to him, that the very prince of evil has all that energy of character, and loftiness of purpose, and enduring fortitude, and daring courage, and enterprising, busy activity, which we may admire, in themselves considered, while we should be shocked at the thought of loving the proud foe himself. Therefore it was that he seldom questioned his love to God, because he was not accustomed to contemplate the divine character as a whole, or to think of it as naturally and necessarily opposed to his own selfish, sinful propensities. And when waking conscience did sometimes suggest a doubt of the genuineness and extent of that love; he felt a misgiving in his soul, a fearfulness which shrunk from a thorough examination. There was a momentary check to the flow of his thoughts, and his mind often turned away, with suppressed emotions, to the consideration of other subjects. Or, if the whisperings of conscience assumed a deeper and a sterner note, and compelled him to examine and admit the truth, he could not find a congeniality of feeling with his God; a dreary hollowness reigned within,—the chill of death was there,—and though his reason was constrained to acknowledge the perfect excellence of God, his heart would not, could not yield in cheerful, unreserved affection.

But new emotions have now sprung up in his bosom; he has felt the kindlings of supreme and ardent love towards the

holy God ; he sees him as he is ; his eye has been fastened on the glories of Jehovah ; a calm, but soothing, cheering influence has come flowing over his soul. He knows now what David felt, when, in the fulness of admiration and delight, he exclaimed, " Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee ; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God ; in thee, O Lord, do I put my trust." There is now a meaning in these words, and the spirit of them sometimes thrills along the fibres of his heart, like a gentle breeze passing over the harp-strings, and stirring them to notes of heavenly melody.

It is God, in all the boundlessness of his perfection and combined variety of his attributes, whom he thus loves. Take, says he, from this inimitable Being his *justice*, and leave him without any principle to distinguish between the good and the bad ; take from him his *sovereignty*, and leave him to the will of his creatures ; take from him his *immutability*, and leave him to the hazard of caprice ; take from him his unyielding *holiness*, and leave him to be tarnished with impurity ; take from him his immediate relations to man, and leave man without his notice, and beyond his control ; and you take from him all his grandeur,—you take from him the very foundation of his loveliness,—you break down his divinity, and leave him but a God in ruins.

Nor is it only in the harmony of its attributes and its various relations, that the Divine character is contemplated with delight. Imagination would soon tire, and thought be lost in the vastness of the Infinite Mind. But the works of God are visible, his providence is passing in varied forms, his moral nature is displayed in his law, and the express image of his person is

embodied in the man Christ Jesus. The sky brightens with new lustre, the landscape smiles with new beauty, every flower assumes a livelier hue, every bird sends forth sweeter notes of music, the floods seem to clap their hands, and the hills to rejoice on every side, as the Christian views in these objects the goodness, wisdom, power and skill of the Almighty God. The influence of confiding love will long be remembered, as it first broke through the gloom of conscious guilt, awoke the mind to new perceptions, and spread out the scenes of earth in all the freshness they had, when, at their creation, the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy. In the history of the world,—which presents nothing to the eye of an unbelieving observer but a succession of confused and accidental events,—the Christian is taught to trace, with growing knowledge and intense interest, the ways of that providence which planned all things from the beginning, and gradually unfolds his plan in its accomplishment, as time rolls onward towards eternity. Even the common occurrences of life exhibit, to some extent, the character of him who controls the smallest as well as the greatest events. The law of God, which is holy and just and good, commands his admiration; and while it condemns his own soul for sins which he had been accustomed to overlook or consider as trivial, and often constrains him to cry out in the language of the apostle, “O wretched man that I am!” it elevates his mind to inspiring conceptions of holiness, and, as he gazes on the transcript of eternal perfection, gradually transforms him into the same image from glory to glory. But, more than all, in the matchless character and wonderful actions of the crucified Jesus, he beholds the brightness of the Father’s image softened by the mingling sympathies of human-

ity, and all the grandeur of God accommodated to the nature, condition and wants of man. It is here that the Christian's love is sometimes warmed into a glow of rapture, and his melting heart flows out in unreserved affection towards his Saviour. It is God in Christ Jesus that raises him above the earth, and gives him an extatic view of the felicity which they enjoy who have already received from their Redeemer a crown of life, and are permitted to sit down with him on his throne.

It is true that such feelings are not always glowing in the Christian's bosom. There are many times when the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, seems to have taken its upward flight, and to have cast the broad, dark shadow of its rising wings over the earth. The deserted soul feels himself to be almost in the condition of the fallen Adam when first driven out of paradise and left to wander over the dull waste of a world that has been cursed for sin. But even in those gloomy hours, those gloomy days, or, it may be, gloomy months, there is yet one principle which was the first to bring new life to his soul, and which will be the last to desert him. There is a faith which sustains him in the absence of exquisite joys, and is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen. It supports him in many temptations, and leads him back from many wanderings to the communion of God. With the feelings of a philosopher who confides in the result of his demonstrations long after the process is forgotten, he may remember the joys he has felt, the prospects he has seen, and the truths he has known, and rest upon these, in faith and hope, when all around is too dark for him to advance.

It is not surprising, then, that one who has experienced such a change in his affections towards God, should seem to be in

many respects another man ; or that the Bible has denominated him, as in the text, *a new creature*. Doubtless there are some among us, who can frankly say, that such affections springing up in the heart, would also change their character ; and some, I trust, are as ready to bear me witness that I have touched one of the secret springs of what they call their religion.

II. But we observe, moreover, that the Christian has *peculiar affections towards mankind*. After noticing, as we have, his peculiar affections towards God, we are prepared to look for corresponding feelings in relation to man. It is naturally and most reasonably supposed, that he who has once lost his fearful apprehensions of the Almighty in admiration of his harmonious perfections and felt the joyful elevations of a soul in communion with the Father of his spirit, will not often or permanently be disturbed by those little nameless contentions which do violence to the sympathies of our nature, and render man cold-hearted and hostile towards his fellow-man. He who is peaceful and happy himself in contemplation of God, and in union of soul with him, must necessarily be predisposed to exercise kind and generous affections towards others. And when he views them as the workmanship of God, fashioned in his own image, and destined to eternal joy or eternal woe, he cannot regard them with indifference, or even with the half-stifled sympathies of common humanity. For it is not now man, his competitor for the comforts, riches, and honors of earth, whom he loves only as private interest, personal attachment, or accidental circumstances may prompt him. But it is man, his fellow,—the creature of the same Creator, subject of the same Sovereign, child of the same Father, and sinner too

against the same God, whom he loves with new and holy affection. The sensibilities of his heart are moved towards him with unwonted emotions. It is not mere instinctive attachment that he feels. It is a noble, rational, enduring affection which the Spirit of God has inspired. It is a love which, instead of confining itself to the narrow limits of time, reaches forward into eternity,—which, instead of expending itself in the mere assiduities of the present life, puts forth unwearied efforts to confer the permanent happiness of a future and endless existence,—which sometimes even overlooks the pleasures of earth, in tender anxiety to secure the bliss of heaven.

Ask now the consistent, warm-hearted Christian, whom imagination has taken along with us in our inquiries, whether this feeling is a stranger to his heart. Ask him, if it did not enter there in company with new affections towards his God. Follow him in those lonely hours, when he retires to the chamber of devotion, and kneels down to breathe out earnest supplications to Heaven in behalf of his relations and friends, his neighbors, his countrymen and the world. Go with him as he mingles in the society of men, or courteously draws his companion aside, and with a resolute suppression of personal feeling that is almost like the pains of martyrdom, speaks freely of sacred truth, and beseeches him by all that is affecting, to become reconciled to God. Watch the movements of his heart in such scenes as these, and then tell me, if you have not detected another secret of his seeming change,—another peculiarity of the Christian character.

III. The Christian is also distinguished by *peculiar purposes of action*. I need scarcely to remind you, that the conduct of men takes its character from the purposes that direct

it. The same individual act may be virtuous or not, according to the motive by which it is prompted. To the superficial and inexperienced eye of a stranger, the multitude of us, who came thronging to the house of God this morning, might seem to be actuated by the same design, and all moving on in pursuit of the same object. Yet who can doubt that the eye of God, who seeth not as man seeth, read very different thoughts and discerned very different purposes in the hearts of the curious and the devout, the avaricious and the diffuse, the careless and the hypocritical, the proud and the humble, him whose whole soul is engrossed with the things of this world, and him whose treasure is laid up in heaven. The apparent act of each is the same, but how different its motive! how different its character! How different, at this moment, are the thoughts and feelings of many who now occupy these seats, with the same composed and becoming demeanor! It is no less absurd than it is unjust, therefore, to judge of men merely by their external appearance, or by their actions in themselves considered. It is not the green leaf or the tinted blossom, that always indicates the poisonous or the wholesome plant.

There is much which lies below the *surface* of human life, that gives character to mankind. This fact is sufficient to solve many difficulties, and to account for many apparent inconsistencies which present themselves, when we turn our attention to the Christian character as it is exhibited in common life. All seem alike to be pleased with clear skies and verdant fields. All are cheered by the kindnesses of friends and the civilities of strangers,—all are animated with prosperity, and in some measure saddened by the gloom of adverse circumstances. The Christian has not become insensible to the



pleasures or the pains of humanity. He can feel the grief of disappointment, the cruelties of reproach and the chills of neglect, as well as others ; he needs to be fed and clothed as well as they ; he does not cease to guard with due care the honor of his name, to provide for the wants of his nature, or to pursue with wonted industry the business of his proper occupation. And yet there is something which seems strangely to modify these feelings,—to control and often to restrain the ardor of his pursuits.

But when we come to observe the different purposes of men, the mystery is all unfolded. Here we see the point from which they start, and the object towards which they severally aim. Most men, if we allow a little for natural sensibilities, and accidental or instinctive promptings, are urged on in life by a selfish desire of earthly happiness, in some of its varied forms. It is this which fills the imagination of the child at his lesson or his task, and encourages him to endure the present toil, by pleasing anticipations of the times when he shall be permitted to break away from paternal constraint, and seize upon the joys which are fancifully playing before him. It is this which nerves the arm of the hardy yeoman, and lights up a smile on the sallow cheek of the scholar at his midnight studies. It is this which gives courage to the soldier and patience to the housewife. It is this which causes such frugality in the home of the miser, and throws around the lover of popular favor an air of generosity. But this, as a supreme, directing principle of action, the Christian has absolutely renounced. With such affections towards God and man as have already been disclosed, his meat and drink must be to do the will of his Father in heaven, his prevailing purpose of action to glorify

God, in the improvement of his own character, and in doing good to mankind. He engages, to some extent, in the same concerns and the same employment with other men, but his ultimate object is different from theirs; and just so far as the affairs of the world interfere with this great purpose, just so far they must be neglected or abandoned. While sojourning on earth, he will not forget that it is right and duty for him to be diligent in business as well as fervent in spirit. While travelling through life, he will not despise the comforts that are kindly afforded him by the way; but they must not beguile or mislead him,—his course is onward,—his home is in the sky.

IV. It is only to be added, that these peculiar affections towards God and towards man, and peculiar purposes of action, operate to modify the Christian's *whole character*; he is, indeed, a new creature,—another man. It is not pretended, however, that he has lost his moral identity, or that his character is entirely transformed at once. Neither the Bible, nor history, nor observation, would justify us in such a supposition as this. You know too well, that the same passions and appetites and weaknesses exist still; for they betray themselves by many a glaring fault, and many a sorrowful impropriety. The principles of holiness, which we have observed, are often weak at first, and must struggle hard for their proper ascendancy. But they will never be expelled from the heart, and nothing has power to subdue them. There is a mighty contest going on within, often indeed remitted, but as often renewed. O, could you always be present before the secret chambers of the Christian's soul, and look in on what is passing there, you might witness many a hard-earned victory over sinful affections that intrude themselves long after they have been despised.

You might see sin subdued in one form, and rising again in another. Now avarice is restrained, and prodigality comes in its place ; now worldliness is subjected, and indolence reigns in its stead ; now frivolity is frowned away, and moping misanthropy sullenly presents itself ; now pride is made humble, and now the exulting spirit is proud of his humility ; now the heart flames with zeal, and now it is chilled with a deathlike indifference,—fair, it may be, and bright without, like the frosts of winter, yet spiritless, cold and forbidding within. But the contest still goes on ; every successive struggle in the Christian's warfare adds freshness to his pious energies, and strength to his holy resolutions. Some sin is overcome, some evil propensity is weakened, some doubt is driven away, some principle of faith is established, some advance is gained towards the final conquest, some progress made towards a triumphant entrance into the Canaan of eternal rest. And at last, as on the verge of Jordan, you will see the war-worn veteran laying aside his armor, with the thrilling exclamation, " I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith ; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of life."

In review of what has been exhibited, I am not aware that the portrait of the Christian's character, which I have so *rudely* sketched, is overdrawn. If the apostle, who uttered the words of our text, were himself present to revise the picture, he might, indeed, erase some unsuccessful strokes, and remove some careless blemishes ; but I doubt not he would give the whole many a deeper tinge, and add new boldness to every feature. Without turning now, to see how it compares with the external appearance of the hypocritical pretender, the cold formalist, or the sluggish, half-living Christian, permit me to ask

you and each of you, do you recognise in it your own character? do you here see yourself? are you indeed a Christian? are you a disciple of Christ? There is no other name given under heaven among men, whereby you can be saved; and "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature."

Are you, then, a new creature in Christ? Have you new affections towards God? Does his existence seem to you real? Is his presence felt? Is his character grand and lovely,—his government wise and good? Are his laws equitable,—his threatenings just,—his promises sure? Have you confidence in his willingness to forgive,—his desire to save,—his readiness to bless? Is it now your delight to thank him for his goodness,—to ask his favor,—to commit all to his care? Do you *know what it is to hold communion with the Father of your spirit*? And have you, also, new affections towards mankind? Do you regard all men as your brethren,—children of your Father,—subjects of your King,—creatures of the same hand that formed you,—equally the objects of divine favor and protection and bounty, day by day,—equally capable of interminable joy,—bound by the same laws with yourselves,—invited by the same voice of redeeming blood,—and urged by the repeated admonitions of the same Holy Spirit? Is it the object of your heart's desire, your daily prayer, your frequent endeavor, your earnest solicitation, that all may be partakers of the same heavenly calling and the same immortal blessedness with yourselves? Have you a tender and self-denying sympathy with all mankind? Do you really rejoice with the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth? Have you, moreover, new purposes of action? Are you living *now* for God and not for yourself,—for heaven and not for earth,—for eternity

and not for time? Is it your desire and your aim to be like Christ? And, finally, are you daily putting off yourselves and putting on the Lord Jesus? Do you find that you are becoming more holy, more devout, more humble, more just, more kind, more honest, more benevolent, more generous, more charitable,—more free from the control of bad temper and evil passions, the rashness of anger and the obstinacy of self-will,—more prompt to forgive, and less prone to complain,—more submissive to the dispensations of providence,—more pure in your desires,—more elevated in your hopes,—more like angels,—more like God,—more fit for heaven? Is not this the picture of the Christian character? Is it not unlike the portrait of the natural heart? Are you, then, a Christian? Are you a disciple of Christ? Are you a new creature? for if any man be in Christ,—the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it,—and echoes the truth,—“if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.”

## SERMON XII.

WHEN YE PRAY, SAY, OUR FATHER.—LUKE 11: 2.

THE feelings with which men approach God are apt to partake of their own character. They either portray him, in imagination, according to their own selfish, sinful desires ; or else, perhaps more commonly, transfer to him the disposition that characterizes themselves. If there had been no sin in the world, they never would have conceived of him as a being of weak and tame indulgence ; nor would they, for a moment, have regarded him as one clothed in terrors. If there were no unkindness in the human heart, men would not think of unkindness in God. If there were no tyranny on earth, they would not fear oppression from Heaven. While Adam retained his innocence, he seems not to have suffered a passing doubt of the goodness of the Being that made him. It was only when he became conscious of guilt, that he heard the voice of the Lord God, and was afraid.

The Bible not only reveals to us truths undiscoverable by human reason, but corrects the various and opposing errors into which our sinfulness is continually misleading us. It exhibits the most clear, consistent and satisfying views of the character of God. It presents him to us as neither foolishly capricious nor coldly indifferent, neither contemptibly yielding nor terrifically rigid and austere. The God of the patriarchs

and prophets and apostles is not the easy and excessively indulgent God of the presumptuous, nor the abstract principle of the philosophic infidel, nor the haughty and unfeeling tyrant of the superstitious. He is a Being at once to be loved and admired. He has all that is sublime, with all that is tender and beautiful and affecting. Without the appetites and passions of the flesh, which bind us in our proper sphere on earth, he has all the original affections of our higher nature in the fullest perfection. He feels love and aversion, joy and grief as really as we, without partaking of our weakness or suffering our degradation. He has all the natural emotions of a pure and supremely exalted spirit. He is truly and affectionately interested in every work of his hands. In the language of approximation, he is sometimes called King and Judge; but the term which seems most fully expressive of his character, and which the Saviour most commonly applied to him is *Father*. When the divine Teacher gathered his chosen disciples around him, and taught them to pray, he instructed them to say, "Our Father."

It may, perhaps, in some measure, enforce this injunction, and win our confidence and love, to contemplate a few moments the paternal character of God, as variously manifested to us in his works and word and providence.

It is displayed in the creation of the world. There was a time when the Eternal Mind dwelt alone. He looked abroad through illimitable space, and there was none but himself. His own nature prompted him to give existence to other objects, fashioned by his wisdom, and wrought by his skill;—and to create living beings, capable of thought and feeling and voluntary action, capable of enjoying happiness, and of grate-

fully acknowledging him as the author of that happiness. He made the angels, who never felt a pang, and who encircle his throne with ceaseless rejoicings. He made this world. He produced the materials of it from nothing, and gave them form. He established the sun in his station, to illumine and bind together a family of orbs. He set the stars in their places. He launched the earth into motion, and gathered its waters into seas, and clothed the dry land with verdure, and shaded it with foliage, and enriched it with fruits. He filled the waters with their appropriate inhabitants, and enlivened the air with insects of every hue, and birds of cheerful note and gay plumage, and covered the hills and plains with flocks and herds and numberless animals after their kind, that sported and rejoiced in their strength, and as the work advanced, we are told, he looked upon it from time to time, and saw that it was good. Last of all, and chief of all, the great object for which all the rest of this beautiful machinery was formed, he made man, in his own image, and after his own likeness,—a miniature of himself,—a rational, moral and immortal soul, and constituted him lord of the world he had made, and “gave him dominion over the fish of the sea, and the fowl of the air, and the beast of the field,—over all the earth, and over every living thing that moved upon the earth. And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, and out of the ground he caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food ; and there he put the man whom he had formed.” He created a social pair, and blessed them, and they were happy,—happy in themselves,—happy in their dwelling-place,—happy in their dominion,—happy in each other’s society,—and happy in him whose image they bore as the proof of their filial relationship.



Surely it must have been with the feelings of a father's fondness and delight, that the Creator looked down upon what he had done, as it stood complete before his eye, and saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good.

The same paternal character is also seen in the government which he instituted over the world. The brute animals were made to perform their necessary functions by instinctive passions and appetites, that allured by pleasure, rather than compelled by pain. But man, with all these propensities, needed for his nobler nature, more rational principles and a higher government. Conscience was made his law ; and was designed to teach what has since been inculcated by a special revelation, the great principles of supreme love to God, and impartial benevolence to men. It is a law equally worthy of a father, and adapted to the relations of children. It constantly reminds them, that they are all alike his offspring, and dear to his heart. It requires them to love one another as members of the same family, having equal rights and equal duties, and calls for their united and supreme affection to be given to him who gave them life and sustains them in being. It exacts not the obedience of a slave, but the obedience of children,—the obedience of the heart. This is all that the Creator demands of man ; and it proves that he feels towards him like a father. Such obedience involves no dread, it implies no constraint, it admits no reluctance. The law, if obeyed at all, is obeyed willingly, cheerfully ; for it is a law of love. It is a law, which, if universally obeyed, would soothe every troubled breast, smooth every furrowed brow, send peace into every dwelling-place of man, and transform this earth into a heaven. It would banish every fear, dispel every doubt, and constrain

us all to say with one united voice, and to feel with sympathetic love, that God is our Father.

The sanctions, too, which were given to this law, correspond with its character, and speak only of the goodness of him who enacted it. They are urgent as its importance; but they do not bind man as with cords and chains, which are always hateful, though the cords be silken and the chains of gold. The sanctions of the law do not destroy his freedom, or degrade the proper dignity of his nature. I say nothing here of what constitutes that freedom. Let those talk of this, who are anxious to make out for him a freedom greater or less than he is conscious of. It is enough that he is not made to feel himself enslaved. It is enough that we may know God has not claimed obedience arbitrarily. He created man a free, responsible, moral being, foretold to him the necessary consequences of obeying or disobeying, and left him to act, without compulsion, according to his choice. He only added to the motives of obligation, glorious, unmerited rewards of obedience, and lifted up a flaming sword in the pathway of sin. He dealt with him as with a child. He seems to have said to him, **My son**, it is right that you obey; but I wish to encourage your virtue, and put you on your guard against any thing that may tempt you to transgress;—if you maintain your integrity, I give you riches and honor; if you disobey, you know you wrong your own soul; but I wish you to act for yourself. Life and death are placed before you—choose—and abide by your choice.

Then the character of the father comes out perhaps more fully, when man had chosen, and committed the first act of disobedience. It may be impossible for us to conceive of the

natural influence which the first transgression might have upon one who had hitherto been innocent and holy. We know it is the tendency of all sin to blind the mind, to deaden the sensibilities of conscience, to harden the heart, to debase the soul. It has this effect in a degree, on the habitual sinner. And we know that the first step in the way of any particular vice gives the guilty one a greater shock, and sinks him lower proportionally even in his own estimation, than any step that succeeds. What then must have been the natural effect of the first guilty deed upon him who had not before known what guiltiness was, nor conceived of remorse? Could we *see* this, we might cease to dispute, and to doubt, and to wonder concerning the fall of man, his subsequent depravity, and the degradation of his species. Whatever this may have been, we know that the threatened curse fell upon him; but it fell as from a father's hand; it gave only a curable wound; and while death, eternal death lingered, there was time for recovery. He was driven indeed from his happy home, and the flood which has since rolled over the earth, has swept away the garden of Eden. The world, in which he wandered, was cursed for his sake; and his children became the inheritors of his woes, as they are, in some sense, of his crimes. But many comforts remained to him. God spared him as a man spareth his son. When we look abroad upon the bright light of the sun, and breathe the mild air, and behold every where the fresh verdure, and the blooming flower, and the rich fruits, and hear the music of birds, and observe the sporting of insects, and see the smile of joy, and welcome the greeting of friends, and think of the quietness and the thousand pleasures of home,

and reflect that this is a world which has been cursed for sin,—for our sin,—it is enough to make us ashamed of our complaints and our sullenness, and to fill our hearts with filial gratitude and love. God has smitten us, but O how lightly ! It was the stroke of a Father.

And while he brought upon the sinning child the threatened curse with so much seeming lenity and forbearance, delaying its full force, and giving opportunity for repentance, his love interposed to encourage repentance, and to save the sinner from yet impending woes. He did not leave him to sink, with sullen desperation, deeper and deeper in his fall. He took on himself, by the eternal Word, to satisfy the violated law, and sent his first begotten Son to wipe away the desponding tear, to calm the unquiet spirit, and to tell of sins forgiven. He freely bore himself the penalty that was incurred, and made an atonement for the irrevocable sin, that astonished heaven. The Divinity came down as man to dwell with man, to share his griefs, and endure for him the consequences of his guilt, that he might reconcile him to himself. He did not wait for man to sue for mercy, and yield at last to importunate prayer. He made the overture. He offered pardon ere pardon was desired. It was such an offer as alone might win the heart, and call the wanderer back. It made no harsh demands, it did not stand on terms, it was no cold compromise. He offered free and full forgiveness for the past, and safety for the future, on the sole condition that he relent and trust. It was an offer that came not at the sinner's call ; it sought the sinner. See you not here paternal fondness ? Sure, it was not the justice of an impartial judge ; it was not the clemency of a

king ; it was not mere pity's boon ; it was the interposition of a Father's love ; it sprung from a Father's warm desire to reclaim and save a wicked child.

Scarcely less illustrative of the paternal character of God is the condition in which mankind are now placed, and the moral influence which he is exerting upon them. We find ourselves living in a situation less agreeable than that which was enjoyed by our first parents, but not less adapted to our character and wants. The kindness of him, who from the beginning established the relation of things, has made even the curse itself subservient to our good. All that it takes from present happiness is more than compensated by the moral discipline it gives. If the whole earth were a paradise, it would not be a fit dwelling-place for us. The ease it would allow, the abundance it would give, the transient pleasures it would afford, would only increase the temptations which are even now too numerous and powerful for us often to resist. Every man would be likely to turn from God and worship only himself,—to disregard heaven and cleave to earth,—to overlook the importance of eternity in the indulgences of time. If necessity imposed no restraints he would seldom restrain himself. Every man would be likely to sensualize and destroy his soul. The world as it is, with all its sufferings and all its toils, is better fitted for us. As it is, men love it sufficiently well ; as it is, they are too commonly charmed by it away from a happier home. When God excluded man from the garden and led him out to dwell in the open and less fertile field, he dealt with him but as a kind and faithful father, who removes his profligate son from scenes of luxury and repose, and places him under the wholesome discipline of simple fare and con-

stant labor. Even the afflictions which we are here so often made to endure do but evince his love. "They speak unto us as unto children, My son despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him. For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?" Every pain we feel tells us, that we have a father above. Every disappointment we suffer reminds us, that we are not forgotten by him. He is admonishing us against that which would destroy our peace. He chasteneth us for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. And he does more. He sends his Holy Spirit to strive with ungrateful sinners, and melt down their hearts in penitence and love. And when a sinner repents, we are told there is joy in heaven,—such joy as is but poorly represented by the mirth of the father's house on that festival day, when he exclaimed, in the fulness of his heart, "This my son was dead and is alive again, was lost and is found!"

But there is nothing that more affectingly manifests the paternal relation of God to men, than the intercourse which he invites and requires in prayer. He might have granted all necessary supplies with their requests, and sustained them in being, though he placed them at a cold and awful distance. But like a father, it certainly seems as if he loved to hold intercourse with them,—to hear his children's voice, to listen to their petitions, to receive their thanks, and to bestow upon them gifts in answer to their expressed desires. If he were a tyrant, he might demand their daily homage, but he would not bend from his throne to hear their prayers, and encourage their

supplications by extending the hand of bounty at their call. It was apparently in special reference to the relation that subsists between the parent and the child, that he instituted the duty of prayer. In the constitution of things that he established at the first, he seems to have made a reserve of certain favors to be conferred only upon those that ask. He would daily fold his children in his embrace, hear them tell their wants, in tones of submissive confidence and love, and pour upon them the blessings of a father's heart. Ye who have known, in the highest degree, what paternal and filial intercourse is, can best appreciate the force of these remarks. But it is enough that you know God has required you to pray, —and when ye pray, to say "Our Father."

I will only add, that God has further manifested his paternal character in the promise, which he has made to those who do not prove incorrigible, that he will one day take them to dwell beside his throne. You will then always behold the face of your Father. Now you see him, at best, but as through a glass darkly; but then you will see him face to face. Now you see but in part and know but in part; then you will see as you are seen and know as you are known. "In my Father's house," said the Saviour, when he bade farewell to his disciples, "In my Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you." And again, "To him that overcometh will I give to sit with me on my throne; even as I also overcame, and am sit down on my Father's throne." You are to sit then, remember, not at the feet of a sovereign, but by the side of a father,—on his throne. You are to be yourselves kings and "wear a starry crown." Even the angelic throng will come

and bow before you,—“For know ye not that ye shall judge angels?” All the glories of heaven are promised to you,—not as a mere gratuity,—but as an inheritance. “He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.” O, it is not a cold-hearted and austere monarch who has made such exceeding great and precious promises! They are the promises of a father.

Christians! God is your father. He is the author of your being; he is your protector and guide. He rules you with a father's tenderness; he sustains you with a father's care; he watches over you with a father's faithfulness; he promises you a father's blessing. He is really and truly interested in your welfare, and directs all things for your good. If he chastises you, you may not complain. “We have had fathers of the flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of our spirits?” If you are surrounded by dangers, you need not be terrified. Have you not seen the little child when the tempest was dark and the lightning flashed and the thunder roared, run and draw himself up on a parent's knee, and feel himself safe in a parent's embrace? If disappointment meets you, you must not be amazed and despair. Do you not know that even a sparrow falleth not to the ground without your heavenly Father? If you are poor, you ought not to be distrustful. Consider the ravens,—your Father feedeth them. When you are sick, you should not be cast down. “As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.” And when you die, O do not die in sadness, trepidation and dismay,—you will but go home to receive your inheritance. Your



religion is not a religion of fearfulness and gloom. It is a religion of hope and gratitude and love. The spirit of the Christian is the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. God is your father. Go to him in confidence; shrink not away from his love; tremble not as you go. It is only guilt that makes you afraid,—it is sin that confuses you with doubts. Go to him as children,—pour out your souls to him in prayer. And “when ye pray, say, Our Father.”

Unrepenting sinners! God is your Father, too. The day may come, when, as an upright father, in due respect to himself, and kind regard to his children who obey, he will banish you for ever from his house. Many an earthly father has done the like, with the united approbation of all around, and been a father still. He may soon bid you depart. But that day has not yet come. He waits for your repentance; he entreats you to turn. “As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, but that he turn from his way and live. Turn ye, for why will ye die!” He is represented as lamenting over you, as a perverse and ungrateful and reckless child. “How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within me.” And whenever you may come to yourself, and will arise and go to your Father, be sure he will come forth to meet you, while yet a great way off, and throw around you the arms of his love. He will forgive all that is past, and make you happy in his favor. O, sinner, you are not rebelling against a tyrant, you are not resisting a despot, you are not even treating a stranger with neglect. You are

neglecting your friend,—you are disregarding your benefactor,—you are abusing kindness,—you are sinning against your Father. Your ingratitude is black,—your disingenuousness is base,—your disobedience is hatefully wicked. Go bow to him to-day, and tell him you have sinned. Confess to him your wickedness and beseech him to forgive. Go pray to him alone,—and “when ye pray, say, *Our Father.*”

## SERMON XIII.\*

FOR WE ARE STRANGERS BEFORE THEE, AND SOJOURNERS, AS WERE  
ALL OUR FATHERS; OUR DAYS ON THE EARTH ARE AS A SHADOW,  
AND THERE IS NONE ABIDING.—1 CHRONICLES 29: 15.

It was when the princes and people of Israel had contributed liberally for the building of the temple, and sufficient means were secured for the erection of that splendid and imposing structure, that David gave utterance to the effusions of his heart, in the prayer that contains the text. Deeply affected with the providence of God, overwhelmed with gratitude, and oppressed with a sense of his imbecility, and the frailty of his fleeting life, he exclaimed, "Thine, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is the power and the might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name. But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee. For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers;

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\* A New Year's Discourse.

our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding."

The sentiment of the text is conceived in the strong and figurative language of the inspired poet. When Abraham was called to leave his native country, it was to sojourn (*i. e.* dwell temporarily) in a strange land; he had no permanent home there,—neither had Isaac or Jacob after him. And when their descendants were brought out of Egypt to go in and possess this strange land which God had promised their fathers to give it to them, they were not allowed to sell their lands, as we presume to do, to such a person and his heirs for ever,—but only for a limited time, not exceeding fifty years, that they might feel they were not the possessors of the earth, but only, as it were, tenants at will. The declaration of God to them was distinct: "The land shall not be sold for ever; for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners." It was probably in allusion to these circumstances, that David said, "we are strangers, and sojourners as were all our fathers." He felt that he had no home on earth. The world was to him,—as it was to his fathers, and as indeed it is to us,—like one great house of entertainment, filled with new visiters, to be emptied, and filled again with other visiters to-morrow; we came yesterday, and we go to-morrow. "Our days on the earth," he continues, "are as a shadow,"—the shadow of some light summer cloud, flying over the field, covering only a little spot; it is now on the hill-side,—now in the valley,—and then it is gone. "And there is none *abiding*." The word in the original seems to refer to the gathering of waters into a sea or lake, where they remain. Life is not like a permanent sea,—“there is none abiding;” it is rather like the river, whose waters follow each other in close succession, and rush rapidly on.

There are many events continually occurring around us, which dispose us to feel like the poet of Israel, and to adopt his language. "We are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers : our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding." We are then thrown into a state of solemn musing. We give ourselves up to the natural and spontaneous suggestions of our own minds.

And the first reflection, perhaps, that occurs to us is, the amazing rapidity of time. We are startled at the thought of it. A year has fled away ; its scenes are chiefly forgotten ; and we seem to ourselves scarcely older than when it began. We may remember when a year appeared to us in anticipation, as an almost endless age. But such a year has been, and is gone like a day. We are made to realize the strong and figurative language of the Bible,—“What is your life? It is as a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then passeth away.” “We spend our years as a tale that is told.”

It is but as yesterday that we were amusing ourselves with the fancies, the sports, and the thoughtless gaiety of childhood. The sounds of our own nursery have scarcely ceased to ring in our ears. The gewgaws with which we trifled, the uncouth toys which our young invention framed, the various playful exercises with which we contrived to beguile the hours which hung tediously upon us, are all still fresh and vivid before our eyes. We may recollect distinctly, as youth was advancing, what plans we formed, and what schemes we laid, to be accomplished before we should arrive at the age of maturity, and take our stand with men on the stage of life. We may remember what learning we hoped to gain, what skill we expected to acquire, and how much we purposed to do in

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preparation for manhood, in the long years that were coming, before we should be permitted to act for ourselves. We looked upon those who were moving among us as masters then, and acting with independence, upon their own responsibility, as standing at a distance from us in the line of time, that we were hardly able to measure.

But these days have all gone by ; these scenes have passed away, and we remember them now as we do the dreams of a last night. We awake to the realities of the present day, and find ourselves in the very condition that appeared to us so distant. Our fathers have already taken, or are fast taking, the place of those whom we were wont to gaze upon and to venerate as the rare and curious representatives of a by-gone age. We look back from our present position, and a single glance covers the whole length of time between. We strive in vain to measure it over ; it has all gone, and gone with the rapidity of thought ; it has passed before us like some phantom, and we can only say it has been, but is not. Years, before our retrospective eye, shrink down to moments. We expected a long life to come before this hour ; but it has been, and is gone, and lo ! it was but a day.

“ Time, in advance, behind him hides his wings,  
And seems to creep, decrepit with his age ;  
Behold him when passed by ; what then is seen,  
But his broad pinions, swifter than the wind ? ”

As we go onward, the velocity of time is ever apparently increasing. Each year seems to move faster and faster, as if with a growing impatience to hurry us away. We are more and more surprised at each period that calls us to look back and mark our progress. We seem to be urged forward, like those

who have come within the circles of a whirlpool, and are moving in the current with a force that increases most rapidly, and bears them along still more swiftly as they approach the point where they are to be engulfed. Our days must soon be numbered and finished ; our end will quickly come ; it hastens while we are musing ; it is spreading swifter and swifter on ; it is almost here ; our life will soon, very soon, be past ; and there will be no more new years for us to welcome.

As thoughts of the amazing rapidity of time thus pass across our minds, another very affecting consideration naturally presents itself. It is our *waste* of time. No man can seriously revert to the past, without being painfully reminded of many hours that are lost. All who reflect must suffer at least an occasional pang on this account. Such a season as the present naturally brings to their recollection many wasted moments which they cannot but regret. Their reflections and regrets, it is probable, usually partake somewhat of their own character, and the nature of their pursuits. The scholar is filled with disquietude at the thought of many neglected opportunities that might have been improved in cultivating the faculties of his mind, and increasing the amount of his knowledge. The man who has no other object before him than the accumulation of wealth by patient industry, laments the hours of ease and self-indulgence that he has lost in earlier or later life. The ambitious and aspiring feel a momentary sting, as memory tells them of seasons that they have remissly suffered to pass by, in which they might have advanced their interests, and better secured their promotion. Those who are scheming for fortunes are in some measure discomfited with a rising but vain wish that misspent days and lost opportunities might now re-

cur to them. And all are more or less saddened because time is lost.

But if any of us are moved by principles of virtue and piety, we have other reasons for reflecting on the waste of time that marks our life. We have to reflect with pain upon the days that have been spent in folly, and worse than in folly, in abuse of those principles of moral rectitude which God implanted in our hearts for our good, to be cherished and strengthened with care. Our passions have been growing vigorous, and enslaving our nobler reason, while we have been weakly indulging in sensuality and sloth. While we have slumbered, or reposed at our ease, noxious weeds have sprung up and grown rank in our depraved hearts, choking and destroying the more delicate plants of virtuous affection. Had we been watchful and active and diligent as we should have been in eradicating every evil principle, repressing every inordinate passion, and improving whatever is generous and elevated in our nature, we might now have been enjoying the happiness of a moral dignity which at present we can only conceive and admire.

We have to remember, with a still deeper regret, the whole years which we have spent in sin and disregard of God. O, could we but win back again those years in which we cast off fear and restrained prayer before God! They were days of peril and of lasting mischief to our souls. Each marked period of our lives must turn our thoughts back to them with increasing and overwhelming sorrow. Precious moments! ye are gone for ever, and have left only dark lines in the recording angel's book, and darker marks upon our hardened hearts. We have to lament them with tears, and weep for the evils which those



worse than wasted years have brought upon us. And would to God that this were all ; but we have to mourn also for the wasted moments of years now passing away. If we had but improved as we ought the year that is just now gone, how holy might we have been, how humble, how heavenly, how peaceful ! Should we have been so languid in our affections, so grovelling in our desires, so distant from God ? Would the world have been so ready to suspect our sincerity ? Would so many have been now slumbering, nay, almost dying in sin ? Christian, go bow to your Saviour and tell him of your wasted time. Let that be the prominent confession in this day's prayers.

Nor is the Christian the only one who may suffer a regret to-day for time lost as to the purposes of religion. There may be others who must remember, with a mournful sigh, their youthful resolutions and expectations. Had it been told them in the days of their childhood, that ten, twenty, or thirty revolving years would pass over them, and leave them without hope and without God in the world, it would have been rejected with incredulity, or received with horror. They fondly hoped and vainly purposed that long ere this, they should be enrolled among the followers of the Lamb. But the years have flown away and left their hearts as earth-bound, and as far strayed from God as before. Their time is wasted, and their souls may be well nigh lost. Is it possible, methinks I hear one say, is it possible, that I could have been so deluded ? O, for those years to return again ! " My time ! I have lost it ! Ah, the treasure ! " The welcome new year plants a thorn in that bosom ; it writhes that heart with anguish.

Intimately connected with such reflections as these, is the

consideration of the *purpose* of time. It is natural, in lamenting its waste, to think of its use and design. But men who think superficially will be likely to judge of it according to their ruling passion and prevailing habits. The avaricious place their chief estimate upon time, as affording opportunity for the accumulation of riches. The aspiring value it, as it gives them opportunity for promotion. The purpose of life, with them, is to rise to the heights of heaven ; and “leave their name, a light, a landmark on the cliffs of fame.”

But there is a principle within us that sometimes speaks, though too often, in a half-stifled voice, and tells us of a higher, a nobler purpose than this. It tells us that time has a relation to eternity. There is something within us which speaks of its own immortality. We cannot easily persuade ourselves that we shall ever cease to be. We cannot believe that we shall ever be as though we had never been. When these bodies wither under disease, shall all that belongs to us, all that constitutes us thinking, sentient beings as we are, return to dust, and become as senseless, for ever, as the clod we tread beneath our feet? It cannot be. There is an instinctive principle here, that speaks out, and says to us, No, it cannot, shall not be.

And this voice is echoed back by the broad circumference of nature's walls. This earth, on which we live, was made for man. The beasts that feed upon it, the fishes that swim in its waters, the fowls that fly in the air, are made subservient to man, and seem to have been formed for his use. This wide theatre of all around us was brought into being for the service of man. And can it be, that the wise Architect has framed such a grand and spacious scene as this for the creature of a

day? Was it that man should spend here a few fleeting hours, sporting himself like an insect in the summer's air, and then pass away and be no more for ever, that God in his wisdom and goodness, laid the foundations of this earth, and spread out these skies? Was it for this that he raised the glorious sun and bade him move on in his sublime and unvarying course? Has he made such a waste as this? Has he formed this world for so mean a purpose? O, no! It was formed to be the nursery of immortal minds. It was designed to be the dwelling-place of those who are preparing for heaven. And this is the purpose of time.

We have the space of these rolling years, that we may prepare for eternity. You are to live, my hearers, you are to live for ever. The last day of time shall come, when this earth shall be needed no more, and be destroyed. But there is that within you which can never be destroyed but by eternal woe. This sun shall cease to shine; but the immortal spark within you shall never be quenched. The stars shall fall from heaven, as a fig-tree casteth her untimely fruit when shaken with the wind; the moon shall be darkened, and the earth shall be burned up; for the angel, standing with one foot on the sea, and the other on the land, shall lift his hand to heaven and swear, Time shall be no more. But you shall be without end. You have begun an existence that will never cease. You will still live, and live on, so long as God himself shall exist.

It is that we may prepare for new and untried scenes that time is now so valuable. It is that we may pass through a kind of pupilage, and be trained for higher pursuits. We are born, and placed on this earth for a season, that we may here be educated, and disciplined, and fit ourselves for a station of

glory. And the man, who overlooks this great object, mistakes the purpose of his being. He has forgotten the errand on which he was sent into the world. His occupations are as useless, in respect to the end for which life was given, as the truant boy's idle amusements; they are insignificant and trivial as the toyings of smiling, thoughtless idiocy. The angels who behold us from above, must look down upon the men who are bustling and striving and toiling solely in the acquisition of terrestrial good, as we do upon the busy emmets of a mole-hill, that are exerting all their little energies with ceaseless diligence, to build a structure which our wandering feet may crush, and to lay up stores for the support of their puny bodies during a few months' existence. Such short-sighted, narrow-minded, unwise men are bowing themselves beneath a burthen, to gather up grains from the earth, while the angel of religious hope is hovering over them with an extended arm, and offering to wing them up to the skies. The ambitious and aspiring amongst them, are struggling to encircle their heads with honors, as poor and trifling in comparison with the glories that ought to be theirs, as the grass wreaths with which children entwine their brows in their sports,—while Jesus himself is calling to these deluded men of earth, and offering them a crown wrought with more than angelic hands, and which can never fade away. Ye abusers of time! look up and behold its purpose. Ye who are so anxious and studious of your own interests! look up and see where your true interest lies. There is the object for which you live. If you have never considered it till now, your life is wrong, your plans are wrong, your designs are wrong, you are all wrong,—you have mistaken the purpose of time.

The importance of this consideration is enhanced by another, which is suggested by our reflections on the past; the *uncertainty* of time. The great rapidity with which our life is passing away is not more startling than the perfect uncertainty of its end. The bud of infancy is often, in a moment, blighted before it has fully blown. The smiling babe turns pale and languid at its mother's heart, and dies in her arms. The sportiveness of childhood is made to cease, its buoyant spirits are sunk, its limbs are still and lifeless, as if in an instant. The warmth of youth is suddenly chilled, its rising vigor faints, its hopes are dashed, its sanguine expectations are disappointed, and its sparkling eye is at once darkened for ever. The strength of manhood yields to a quick and unseen blow, and the life of the old man, who was expecting to languish out a few more years in feebleness, is broken by an unanticipated stroke. There is no calculation here. We cannot tell what a day or an hour may bring forth. Riches, wisdom, honor, usefulness, confidence, fearlessness or presumption, can give you no security,—they make no moments sure.

It is only when we reflect, with recollective composure and some degree of pensiveness, that we are fully aware how precarious our earthly existence is. We forget how many, who began with us the journey of life, have fallen by the way. Any man, who has lived to the age of forty or thirty or even twenty years, must be astonished and tenderly moved when he musingly reverts to the history of the past, and calls over the companions of his earlier days. Where are all that young throng whose wild voices once mingled with ours,—as wild and as boisterous as theirs? May we hear all those voices again? The mates who once stood with us side by side to repeat the

school-day task,—is no one of them gone? Where is he who often appeared foremost in the ring, and marshalled his comrades for the game? or that kind-hearted one whose tenderness and sympathy made her the friend of all the weak and unfortunate? Where are all those whose gleesome countenances and sprightly tones were wont to thrill our hearts with joy? Does not memory run back and weep at the recollection of one and another and another who are sleeping that sleep from which we cannot arouse them? Ye early associates! sleep on; your companions shall soon sleep, perhaps, by your side. From earliest childhood to this hour, we have been admonished, by such successive deaths, of the uncertain but quick approach of our end. Many with whom we often talked of coming manhood, and consulted upon our rising prospects, have left us while we seemed still listening to their voice, and will speak to us no more. We may no more eagerly grasp that hand which has so often been opened to welcome our friendship. We may no more smile at the pleasantry that was given to cheer us. Those lips are silent now; and that face which once spoke volumes, as it lighted up with a flash, is henceforth dark and speechless as the sod that covers it. These have all gone, while we have been careering on, forgetful how often they have dropped behind us, and unmindful that their fate must soon be ours. Our friends and companions are continually falling by our side, while others come in to take their place in the crowd, and we are still borne thoughtlessly and gaily along to our tomb. We heed not the call, we remember not the dying farewell, that bids us think of the uncertainty of our time.

The last year, my hearers, has brought to your ears, as

usual, many such parting notes. All along the more recent months, time's heralds seem to have stood forth, and proclaimed to you in death tones, "Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye *think not* the Son of man cometh." Your time is always ready. Look on your fallen neighbor, reflect, consider and prepare to meet your God. To some of you, this message has been uttered much nearer than this. The destroying angel has entered your own dwelling, and smitten and laid all ghastly before you, one of your dearest friends. Last summer's sun sent his struggling beams through the narrow opening of many a darkened room, where death was working his terrible purpose of destruction, or marking victims for his own. The parent, the brother, or the sister, and the child have been alike the objects of his choice. The old man of many years, the youth and the nursling have been stricken and borne to their grave. The heart that was scarcely healed of its wounds has been made to bleed again, as another, and another beloved relative has been torn forcibly away; while the number of the mourners has been multiplied continually.

\* \* \* What ravages have been made upon this community! How many have been clothed in mourning! How often must the plaintive voice have been heard! "Pity me, O ye my friends, for the hand of God has smitten me." The hand of God has smitten you, my friends; but it was in kindness, not in wrath. It was to remind you of the uncertainty of time, of the frailty of your earthly friends, and to admonish you to place your affections on him who can never die. These providences had a design to turn your thoughts to God. O, if you are still estranged from him, who can tell what woes may come upon you yet? Or if there be no more such pains

for you to suffer, it may be because the last kind chastisement has been given, the last bereavement has been felt, the last monition has been offered ; and the next stroke shall lay you in the dust. Mourners, look to him, who wounds that he may heal ; look to him, who is calling you to-day, perhaps for the last time calling you to his embrace.

There is a kind of melancholy pleasure in lingering around the graves of our departed friends. But the duties that yet remain to us call us away. While we stay in such reflections as these, another year is moving on in its course. We turn for a moment to anticipate its scenes. What shall another year bring to us ? What shall it bring to this community ? Shall — more be selected from your number, and sent to the tomb ? Must these mourning scenes be acted over again ? Must so many families be broken, so many tears be shed, so many hearts be grieved ? And who of you shall the slain be ? We would not lift the veil that hides the future. It is enough for us to think of what may come. Parents, you may this year bury your young hopes in the dust. The little ones that now prattle on your knees may breathe their last sigh and expire. Husbands and wives, your bosoms may be left bleeding and torn ; for the ties that have bound you closer and closer in affection as the years passed, may be broken for ever. Children, you may cast a last look on the venerated form of the parents that have fed and caressed you so kindly. Heirs of affliction, you may yourselves pine away in sickness or agonize in torturing pain. Or worse, far worse, erring men, open sins may disgrace you and crimes mark you with guilt. Or some near relative may fill you with anguish by his waywardness and transgressions. Or brighter scenes may be



before you, and unexpected prosperity give you joy. Perhaps that this year you may be born a child of God ; and henceforth cry, Abba, Father.

But we may not dwell in doubtful anticipations. There is one certainty on which we may fix our thoughts. The years of us all will soon have rolled away. This whole congregation will be removed from the earth. The tongue that now speaks will be mute ; the ear that now hears will perceive no sounds. This sun shall continue in its time to arise and shine, but our eyes will not see its light. The winds shall sweep over these hills, and along these valleys, but we shall feel no breeze. The summer shall continue to return and bloom, but we shall not heed its beauties, nor gather its fragrance. The same river shall roll on in its channel, but your feet will not stand upon its banks. The houses which you now call your own may here stand in thick neighborhood, but other steps than yours shall tread their halls, and other men occupy their rooms. A little longer, and it will all be true. A little longer, and the places that now know you shall know you no more. A little longer, and we shall all be numbered with the generations that are past. We all shall be dead.

We all shall be dead ; yes, these bodies shall be lifeless ; but the spirit that animates them, where shall it be ! Where, then, shall be the immortal soul ? Shining as an angel of light before the throne of God, or wailing in the blackness of despair ! Where are now the despisers and the neglecters of Jehovah ! Up, then, and strive to enter in at the straight gate, and pursue the narrow way that leads to life. There is no time for self-indulgence and slothfulness now. We have a great work to do. Careless sinners, awake ! You have yet a

soul to save, an eternal heaven to secure. Sluggish Christians, can *you* slumber? Just on the verge of heaven, and yet slumber! Your Master will soon come, and call you to his home. "Watch, therefore, and pray, lest ye enter into temptation: knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep, for now is your salvation nearer than when you believed."

Fellow-travellers to the tomb! we have thought on the past; we have anticipated the future. A new year is now begun; its scenes are coming on; its duties demand our care. Let us begin it with new resolutions. Let us spend it in new obedience to God. And if we fall before its close, let us fall like men, fall like Christians, who hope to rise again; fall like faithful soldiers of Jesus Christ,—faithful to the last. Be not dismayed. Tremble not as you go. Tread even the verge of Jordan with firm, unfaltering steps. Behold its dark waters with a calm and steady eye. There is a blissful ocean beyond. The angel of life shall guide you safe through. Your feet shall stand in the promised land. Another year these eyes may not behold. Another year, and our names may be read on the list of the departed. Be it so. Let God determine. "Thy will, O Lord, be done." The future is all thine own. Mourning friends, dry up your tears. Fearful hearts, lay hold on hope. Erring sinners, turn to God. Believing Christians, press onward to your home. Immortal souls, live for heaven. Then yield to death, in peace, at his coming. Let these bodies die. Give these limbs to the dust. Another life is before you. You may welcome it with joy. Welcome, not a new year, but a new, a happy, a glorious eternity!

## SERMON XIV.\*

HITHERTO HATH THE LORD HELPED US.—1 SAMUEL 7: 12.

THERE are times when it is peculiarly proper for us to pause a moment on the journey of life, and to look back upon the past, that we may derive instruction and encouragement from the scenes we have gone through, and to cast an eye around upon the present, and send a glance forward to the future, that we may discern more clearly the right direction of the course we are pursuing, and learn what duties yet remain to be fulfilled. There are periods in the history of states, as well as of individuals, which serve as a kind of waymarks in the progress of human affairs, and which invite the traveller, as he passes, to rest from his weariness, to look back, reflect, gather up new strength, and form new purposes. There are times when we seem rightly called to direct our attention more especially to the errors we have made, the mistakes which have impeded our advancement, the faults we have committed, and the sins of which we have been guilty, that by seasonable repentance, by fasting and humiliation and prayer, we may reform our lives and hearts, avert the displeasure of the Great Ruler of events, and move forward with a more steadfast and undeviating step. There are days, also, like the present, when we are invited to notice principally the mercies that have followed us, the blessings we have received, the kind interposi-

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\* A Thanksgiving Discourse, delivered, it is thought, in 1832.

tions which have been made in our behalf, and the bounties which have been graciously bestowed upon us, that we may render again to God according to his benefits, with festive joy and gladsome thankfulness, as did the pious Jews at the yearly feast of the tabernacles, immediately after the ingathering of the fruits. For there is a time to rejoice, as well as a time to mourn.

It was wise and pious in our Pilgrim fathers, in the establishment of this young community, to appropriate one day in the return of each year to thanksgiving. It may be welcomed now with the increased interest that ever venerable time has thrown around it, the pleasing associations that memory weaves in recollection of the yearly return of long absent friends, the reunion of scattered families, the light that has relumined the faded cheeks of revered parents, and flashed in the face of youth, as the most pleasant scenes of childhood and home were lived over again, and crowded into the bright hours of a single day. Well may it be observed, therefore, with happy hearts and cheerful voices, suppressing for the time at least every mournful emotion, and indulging only the kindlier feelings of our nature. Let it be a day of grateful rejoicing. Partake generously of the various profusions of the year, give freedom to the sweet sympathies of humanity, and impart with an open hand and a liberal spirit to those who have need, that the voice of gladness may be heard in every dwelling. In accordance with the time-sanctioned example of our fathers, and the simple but pertinent language of the Bible, "Eat the fat and drink the sweet, and send portions to them for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy unto the Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength."

The present, however, is more especially a public, and in some sense a national, festival. It is appointed by the high authorities of our Commonwealth. We are directed to observe it in reference to those blessings which we enjoy as members of a well-established, prosperous and growing republic. It may not be inconsistent, therefore, with the design of this appointment, to turn our thoughts, for the passing hour, to the consideration of some of those circumstances in the *settlement* and *growth* and *present condition* of our country, which best evince the watchfulness and control of a kind Providence, and call for an expression of universal and heartfelt thankfulness.

There is scarcely any thing to be found in political history, that has affected, and is likely to affect so deeply, the interests of mankind, as the establishment of genuine civil and religious liberty in this land of our fathers. And for no other events have the seeming preparations of divine Providence been so great and so strongly marked. A system of government entirely new was to be set up ; and there was not a spot in the known world where it might stand : another continent was called into being. There was not a nation on the face of the globe fit to support this new government ;—one was formed for the purpose, in a manner altogether peculiar. The whole world seemed to be moved and renovated. Religion was reformed, learning revived, printing invented, a compass provided, to guide the daring mariner through the pathless ocean, and America itself discovered, almost in an instant. Since the moment when God said, “ Let there be light, and there was light,” nothing more evidently manifests his agency than this.

But it may be more particularly observed, as one of the circumstances to which we should turn our attention, that this part of the newly discovered country, on which the footsteps

of human freedom were first impressed, was exactly adapted to the purpose. It was wild, iron-bound and stubborn, yielding an ample support only by the most energetic and persevering industry. It was the soil in which the tree of liberty, that often dies in a garden, flourishes best. The hardihood, enterprise and independence of New England might never have been, if her sons had found here the fertile fields of Italy, or the vineyards of France. The rich mines of Mexico and Peru have only served there to weaken the energies and retard the progress of mind. It was here, amid these rough and unsightly hills, that was laid the foundation of what has long since gone into a proverb, "That New England men can do any thing, endure any thing, accomplish any thing."

The people who were selected by unerring wisdom to settle this land, next demand our notice. They were gathered from among the choicest spirits of the most favored nation then on the earth. The principles of reform which were spreading over the continent of Europe, had reached the shores of England; they were congenial to the superior knowledge and bold, liberal spirit of that high-minded people. Notwithstanding the efforts that were made to suppress or restrain them, there were those among this people who could not be satisfied even with what they considered a partial reformation. Their minds had just awoke from long slumber, and could not easily be lulled to sleep again. Under the reigns of Henry VIII and of Edward his son, they persevered in firm adherence and devoted attachment to the cause they had espoused, making any and even the greatest sacrifices on its account. In the reign and under the persecutions of queen Mary, being banished from their native land, they made still farther advances in the school of Geneva, and returned, when afterwards recalled

by queen Elizabeth, more confirmed, bold and resolute than ever. It was this class of men, so resolutely bent upon a thorough reformation, both in government and religion, that, from the *purity* they claimed in their principles, their manners and mode of worship, were tauntingly denominated *Puritans*. To these Puritans,—among whom, in the reign of Charles I, there were, in the language of Mr. Hume, who was never suspected of loving them too well, some men of the greatest parts and most extensive knowledge the nation at that time produced,—to these Puritans, according to the same historian, England owes all she enjoys of rational liberty. And to these Puritans,—persecuted, but magnanimous Puritans,—we, my friends, under God, owe our existence, as a free, independent, prosperous, and to-day I trust, thankful people. They were our fathers.

Another circumstance, worthy of present notice, is the peculiar manner in which the men, thus selected by Providence, were brought to this land, and became the founders of our State. Worn out, at length, by oppression, and irritated by restraint, the devoted Robinson, with his little church of Puritans, forsook the land of their birth, and fled, 1608, into Holland, first to Amsterdam, afterwards to Leyden, where they sojourned till the ties which bind men to their native land were finally severed, and those of mutual attachment interwoven with their existence. But the storms, and the deep, turbid waters of persecution, were still raging around them, and like the dove sent forth from the ark, they could find no rest for their feet. Then a new purpose, as yet unthought of, and suggested, perhaps, by the Holy One, came into their minds. There, in the spirit of Christian devotedness, they formed the almost desperate determination of transporting themselves to

what was called the *New World*. As a pious soul, wearied with the troubles of life, and disgusted with the wickedness of earth, sometimes becomes anxious to launch forth on the dark ocean of death, in hope of reaching a haven of eternal rest, these Puritan Pilgrims were ready to sacrifice every thing else, for one distant, unknown spot, where they might enjoy their native liberty, and worship God in peace. At first, they applied to the king for protection, but he refused to grant it,—and happy for us that he did. Had the king favored the enterprise, this country might have been founded on royal principles, and we, instead of offering grateful praises to the Most High, might now have been assembled to pay fulsome adulation to a hereditary monarch,—a weak, depraved man like ourselves. At length, however, the government gave secret assurance, that they would *connive* at the departure of the Pilgrims; and the heroes resolved to trust the event. They chose the mouth of the Hudson, as the termination of their perilous voyage; but the treachery of their Dutch commander, under the control of him who makes even the wrath of man to praise him, bore them to a rougher clime and a harder soil, yet to a better, and perhaps the only suitable spot, on which to lay the corner-stone of their mighty and glorious work. In the cold of December, 1620, they landed on the then inhospitable shores of New England,—on the ice-bound rock of Plymouth. “Surely man deviseth his way, but God directeth his steps.” And who is not prepared to exclaim with pious acknowledgment, “In all this, the Lord hath helped us!”

But if the peculiarities of the first settlement of this country so remarkably evince the overruling and directing agency of a kind Providence, those of its early growth are, on the same account, not less deserving of our consideration. Even



those circumstances, which seemed at first dark and forbidding, have, in the progress of time, become illumined with a cheering brightness. The same hardihood, independence and magnanimity, which characterized the men who first came to these shores, were by various means strengthened in themselves, and fostered in their children. The very privations which the early adventurers, and their children for many generations, were obliged to submit to,—the almost incredible sacrifices they were called to make for mental improvement and religious instruction,—the obstacles they must surmount in subduing a hard and rocky soil, and in opening a free communication from neighbor to neighbor through the wilderness,—their frequent and bloody contests with the ferocious and inhuman savages, when the mother clasped the infant to her breast, and the father sprung from his couch, at the sound of every murmuring breeze by night,—all seemed to cherish a sense of dependence on the Supreme Being, and to make men virtuous, active and courageous. They formed what might be termed our national education, ere the character of manhood was publicly assumed.

And in that last great event which issued in our complete deliverance from foreign domination, there may also now be discovered, with joy and thankfulness, the same deep wisdom, and discreet, well-directed goodness of him, who sees not as man sees, and whose ways are not as man's ways. I refer to the long, difficult and sometimes doubtful struggle for national freedom. It seems to have been all necessary to prepare the people to possess and retain the blessing. This State was, indeed, foremost and nobly great in the work; but after all, must have ultimately failed, if left alone. The other States, being

so long engaged with us in one common cause, became at last closely and firmly united. Political knowledge was also more generally diffused, opinions more thoroughly discussed ; measures proposed were matured with time, and the public mind gradually prepared for an event it did not at first anticipate. The aid of the unseen hand was more earnestly implored, and they who were about to break from the dominion of an earthly sovereign, made of necessity more loyal subjects of the King of kings. It was wise and good that the very thing was permitted, which beforehand we should have been most likely to deprecate. The people were made to bow in anxiety before God, but not to despair. A dark cloud long hung over and around them, but, ever and anon, there was a breaking up of the storm, and hope painted her brightest, gayest colors on the parting cloud. At length, the sun broke through with unrivalled glory, the sky was cleared of every vapor, peace smiled far and wide, and the world acknowledged, what more than fifty years ago was boldly declared, and has ever since been well maintained,—our national independence. Here, then, we may again pause, and rejoice and exclaim, “Hitherto hath the Lord helped us !”

Nor does the same kind agency which conducted us to this elevation, here cease to be displayed in our behalf. The Eastern continent was soon shaken to its centre ; and Europe suffered to involve itself in awful confusion, as if to divert the attention of sovereigns from our young republic, till it had recovered from its almost exhausted strength, and become sufficiently strong to set opposition at defiance. For a while these commotions of the Old World only shook off its wealth upon the New ; and when, at last, the agitated billows of devastation began to reach us, we were happily rescued from

danger, and our peaceful, gallant bark now floats on the full tide of prosperity.

We may cast an eye around upon our present condition with delight and thankful exultation. Our government has stood the test of half a century, and become in some measure established by time. The little band of fleeing, persecuted Pilgrims have spread far and wide, mingling with the emigrants of every nation on earth, and have become a population of more than twelve millions. Instead of the little rock on which they first rested their trembling limbs, we have now a territory reaching from the Atlantic to the Pacific, an extent over which the eye of civilized man has scarcely ranged. The tall forest, which had bid defiance to ages, has yielded to harvest fields and villages and cities. The sails of our commerce whiten every sea, and our flag floats gallantly in every port. At home, the sound of the loom mingles with the noise of almost every stream ; and the music of the hammer and the forge is now heard in the West, where a few years since nothing broke the silence of the vast wilderness, save the howling of the storm, or the more hideous howl of savage beasts or savage men. We have become a great, renowned, free and thriving nation,—a spectacle to the world,—a powerful, independent family, to which the sons of struggling liberty every where look for example, for encouragement and support.

But there are a few circumstances in our present situation that may not, in gratitude, be passed over without a more particular, though, it must be, hasty notice. And the first I shall mention is, our remoteness from other powerful nations, and the commodiously wide extent of our own territory. While the kingdoms of the Old World are continually jostling each other in their interfering interests, and watching, with a jealous

eye, every movement of each neighboring state, and interposing their influence to prevent any important change or improvement, we are too distant to be an object of their immediate jealousy, and too far beyond their reach to be subject to their control. We can here be surrounded with no allied powers or misnamed holy alliance, ready to break in upon our limits, like wild beasts from a neighboring forest, and trample down the fair plants of liberty and human improvement in their first blossomings. We may sit upon these shores, at a safe and happy distance, while the noise of their mutual commotions only reaches us across the wide and deep waters that interpose an everlasting barrier for our defence. And here, in our own home, spreads a great and inviting territory, that affords ample room for all its multiplying inhabitants. We are not likely to become so dense as the population of those narrow and limited countries, where the great and the rich and the powerful tread down the weak and the poor to make room for themselves, and the latter are left to contend with each other because they are so closely compressed. Our manufacturing estates, which are every where springing up, as by the magic of an enchanter's wand, are not likely to collect into a few great, sickly and wicked cities, monopolizing privileges, and sending a dangerous, immoral and factious influence all around them ; but growing up in little peaceful communities on almost every stream, and by the side of every waterfall through the wide land, they may breathe a healthful and virtuous atmosphere themselves, and give life and spirit wherever they are found. The useful, ingenious and multiplying mechanics may every where find room and ready support ; while the millions of husbandmen,—whose condition is, perhaps, the most enviable of all,—unlike those of Europe, living on their own soil and farming their own lands,

are destined by the same general circumstance to be the strength, the dependence, the stability and the glory of our country.

Intimately connected with this consideration, is the equality of rank and wealth that generally prevails and must prevail amongst us. We have no lords in our villages of freemen, swelling themselves into petty tyrants over each little neighborhood; no privileged gentry, exempt from the common burdens of the state; and none who may impose upon us any hereditary claims to be great and to rule over us. The very contentions to which we are, of necessity, so often subject in our various elections, prove that every man must stand upon his own merits, and depend solely on the estimation in which he is held by the mass of his fellow-citizens, who each of them feel their individual importance in the great question, and will exercise their undoubted right to examine and decide and act for themselves. Nor are there likely to be accumulated many, if any such huge estates, as to give their possessor an undue authority, and overlook and debase a multitude of poor, depressed dependents. All have the means of competency, while, happily, the prospect and the opportunity of amassing dangerous fortunes is every year growing less and less. None are subjected, by the circumstances of their birth, to hopeless want, or shameless mendicity. All may have a share in the great stock of state, and all, therefore, feel an interest in its preservation. What we call the rich may thus be protected in their possessions, the poor secured in their earnings, and sufficient advantages opened to encourage and reward the active, intelligent and persevering, for their spirit of enterprise.

Of still more importance to us as a people, are the means enjoyed, especially in this State, by all classes of the community, for intellectual and moral instruction. It was a wise, a

blessed provision of our fathers, to secure to every member of society,—however rich, however poor,—the same privileges of education in our common schools. Go, range the wide earth, and you cannot find a people in this respect so richly favored as ours. It is rare, I trust it is very rare, to find here, in the lowliest, meanest hut, the man, woman or child of twelve years old, who cannot both read and write. At the present day, a new, an unparalleled, a joyful impetus is given in efforts made to increase the privilege. Every child, whose parent pays the tax of a dollar or no tax at all, may soon be admitted, in common with the richest of their neighbors, to all the advantages, in a *district* school, which were formerly secured only to the more opulent and prosperous in a few and distant academies. Yes, every child, however destitute and obscure, may enjoy all the *public* advantages of education, and, perhaps, greater than ever blessed our Franklin, or, if I mistake not, our Washington. If there be but spirit in the community to improve these means, it will be impossible to impose on the people, through their ignorance, in any of their important interests, public or domestic, commercial, civil or religious. New forms of improvement must be continually struck out in every department of science and art, and the people, if they are but true to themselves, go on prospering from generation to generation, with increasing and admirable celerity.

There is only one thing more, in this connection, which I may at present presume to touch upon, and which it would be almost impious in an assembly of worshippers, on such an occasion as this, entirely to omit. It is our religious institutions and prospects. Let it not be forgotten, that this country owes all its glory and happiness to the religious character and principles of its founders and early supporters. They were men

of deep, sincere and ardent piety,—men that loved religion, were persecuted for their religion, sacrificed every thing on account of their religion, came to this very spot for the sake of religion, that here they might indulge and cherish religion, without molestation.

On the principles of the Bible they here laid the foundation-stone of this great empire ; on these principles it stood firm ; on these alone such an empire could stand ; on these it has risen up to be as it is, the wonder and admiration of mankind. It was that system of evangelical religion, which our fathers fully believed, sacredly cultivated, faithfully practised, and strenuously maintained, that gave them their matchless success. It is this which, notwithstanding the opposition of its enemies, the hypocrisy and treachery of its pretended advocates, and the faults and mistakes of its real friends, has ever exerted, and ever will exert, a redeeming influence on the hearts and lives and condition of men. It moves on majestically, with firm, sure, and certain progress, and will continue to move on, till the whole world becomes as holy and upright as the little band of Pilgrim Puritans ; and all nations as happy and happier than we are now. Well then may every philanthropist and every patriot, as well as every Christian, rejoice with gratefulness to-day, over the increased, increasing and successful efforts that are now making to disseminate its blessings. It was the sentiment of that great man whom we all love to remember, that the integrity and uprightness and freedom of a people could not be preserved without the sanctions of religion. It was the strict integrity, the regular and temperate habits, the unwearied industry, the self-command, the patience, perseverance, hardihood, patriotism and heroism, the high sense of rigid morality, and more than these, an all-pervading religious

faith, giving birth and strength to these virtues,—in short, the habitual prayerfulness of our fathers, that gained for us all we enjoy. And methinks, a voice sounds to us from their graves to-day : Sons, forget not with ingratitude your pious ancestors, —forget not how we won for you your greatness, your freedom and your comforts,—forget not that this happy republic is based on the character of her citizens, and if you should prove unworthy of your sires, if there should not be virtue, piety enough in the community to support it, some Marius, or Philip, or Cæsar, will arise, to demolish the fair fabric, and burying its ruins in the dust, write, *Troy was*,—the glory has departed,—in broad and indelible characters where it stood.

And do not your hearts respond,—No, ye venerable, ye sainted ones ! we will not forget you,—will not, by our immorality, our ingratitude to God, and our irreligion, suffer the precious legacy to be wasted, or wrested from us. This country, New England especially, is one of the greatest civil gifts, which Heaven has ever bestowed on our world. Another New England can never be. Another nation like ours can never be formed. There are no more continents to be discovered. Every ocean and sea have been navigated and explored. There is no other distant, unknown new world yet to be found, to which the noblest and holiest spirits of old and degenerate nations may be transported, as our fathers were, to begin the work of civil and religious freedom and human improvement anew. Such a peculiar combination of circumstances cannot return again. Such a nation as ours, if this succeed not, the world may never hope to see. Here is found the fairest experiment that can possibly be made. If this should fail,—if this people should become corrupt, and our free and happy institutions be broken down,—liberty and virtue and religion may



together put on their mourning weeds, and come and sit down among the ruins, and weep and sigh to each other, for their fondest hopes have perished.

We may not, we will not, indulge any such sad forebodings on a day like this. We have too much to rejoice in,—we hear the admonition of our fathers, and thank God for the monitory voice. Let us rather be prompt to obey their injunctions. Every man may do something. Let each one exhibit in himself an example of what a citizen should be. Let every man, by his industry, the improvement of his talents, the use of his wealth, his vote, his influence and his prayers, stand up in the strength of the Lord, to guard and defend the glory of our land. Let schools be multiplied and improved, as they promise to be. Let the rising generation be trained to habits of activity, temperance, frugality and uprightness. Let the rights of man be sacredly regarded, even in the most trivial concerns. Let the Sabbath be observed, and religion revered, and we shall not fail,—our hopes shall not be disappointed,—our present joy shall not be turned into sorrow,—the nation and state shall live to the end of time, and be that happy people whose God is the Lord. The eagle of America, now rising among the nations of the earth, shall continue to rise yet higher and higher in her flight toward heaven, till her broad wings overshadow and give peace to the world.

But it is more than time that we turn from considerations which have occupied us so long, and with a single glance at more private blessings, pour out our hearts in thankfulness to God. The past year has been blessed with peace and plenty in all our borders. The earth has brought forth her fruits in abundance. Our trade, which has been in some measure de-

pressed, is again reviving. Our manufacturing interests are assuming a much more promising aspect. Improvements have been made in almost every important art. Education, which before had been so carefully watched and cherished, has of late put on all the freshness and promise of a youthful adventurer. If some gross crimes have shocked our sensibilities, and cast a seeming blot on the character of our powerful community, the promptness of the public in detecting and punishing, shows that there is too much virtue yet in our State not to abhor and tremble at such enormities.

That God who controls the pestilence that walketh in darkness and the destruction which wasteth at noonday, has this year smiled upon his people, and held back the destroying angel. No prevalent disease has been suffered to ravage our towns. And if some of you, my hearers, have in this respect been made a seeming exception, and given up for a season to trying afflictions,—I doubt not you can yet find much, very much, whereof to be thankful. In the midst of judgment, God has remembered mercy for you. To-day, O fail not to thank him for his goodness. If some comforts have been taken from you, yet how many have been preserved. If any of you have watched with painful anxiety around the bed of suffering friends that yet live, bless him, that they are spared to you. If any of you have been made the victim of disease, thank him,—can you fail to thank him,—that beyond your fears you have risen again in strength, and are permitted to present yourselves before him this day in his courts with praise. Remember, when you lay burning with fever, or panting with faintness and disease, how you would have rejoiced could such a blessing have then been secured to you. There are also blessings, to which I cannot

refer. As every heart knoweth its own bitterness, so there are joys which the stranger intermeddleth not with. Look around on your own fire-sides,—look back on your own private history,—look within your own bosoms, and see if you have not enough to fill those bosoms with swelling, bursting thankfulness.

To thank God, to praise him, is a privilege, is a duty, which I fear we are too apt to neglect. What wonder, if he should withhold from us many mercies, when we are so ungrateful for those we receive? What wonder of loving-kindness, that he has never forgotten us, when we have so often forgotten him. O, how great, how overwhelming, is our sin of ingratitude! He made us, he preserves us, he has given us all those pleasures which have amused us when we have forgotten him. He is worthy in himself of eternal admiration. He is worthy of the highest, and more than the highest, praises we can give. We cannot exalt him, we cannot reach his glory,—angels find their heaven in praising him. The Holy Ghost commands us to praise him. "Praise the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever." "Rejoice in the Lord, rejoice always, and again, I say rejoice." "Be careful for nothing, but in every thing, by prayer and supplication, with *thanksgiving*, let your requests be made known unto God." My friends, when you suffer yourselves to despond, and to be cast down, do you ever think of these exhortations, do you remember these commands? The same God who has said, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," hath also said, "Give thanks unto God." Bless ye the Lord. Praise his holy name for ever. Rejoice, even in tribulation.

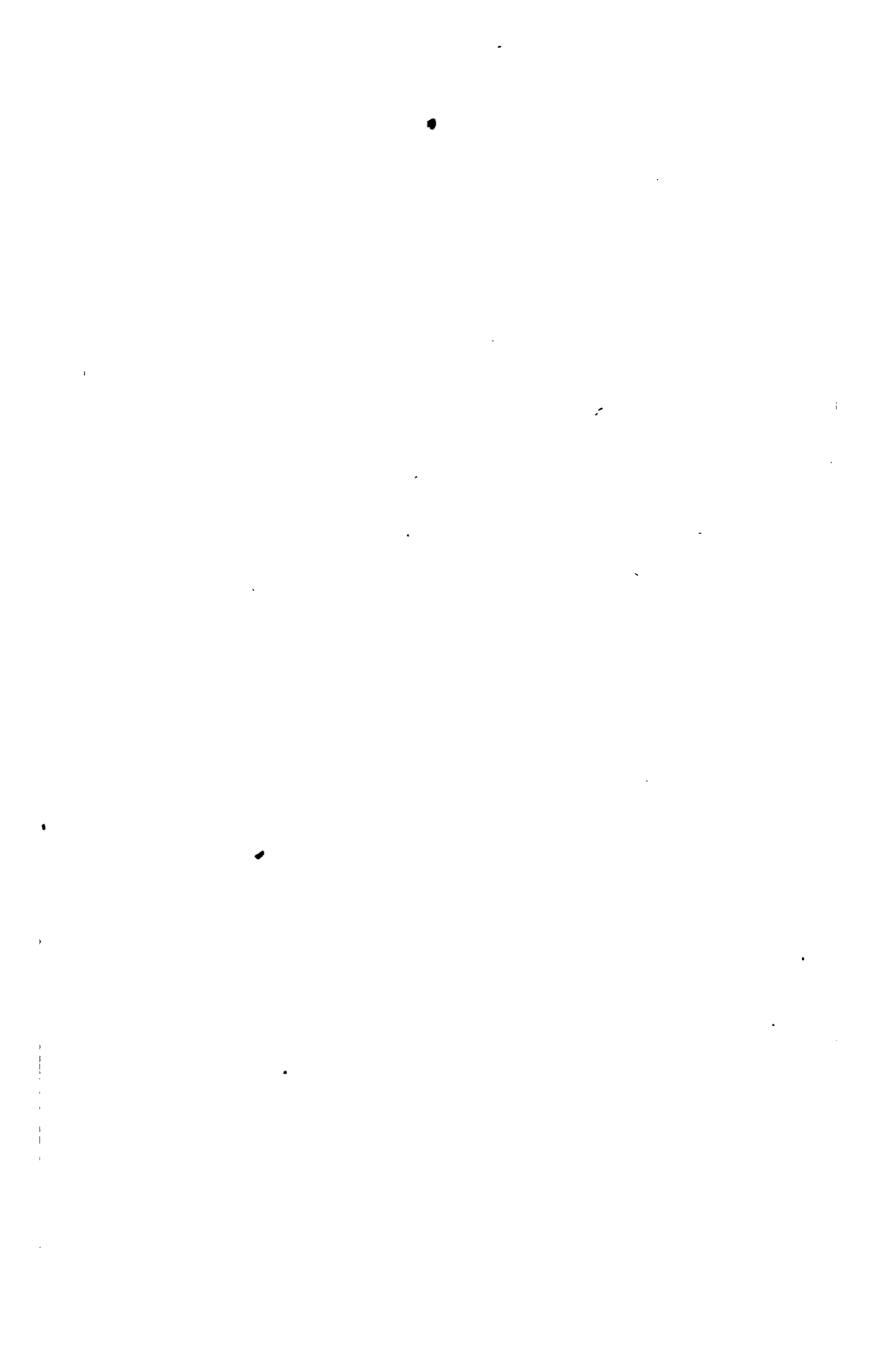
We will rejoice, we will thank him, we will praise him, to-day. Hail, Universal Lord! We call on our souls and all

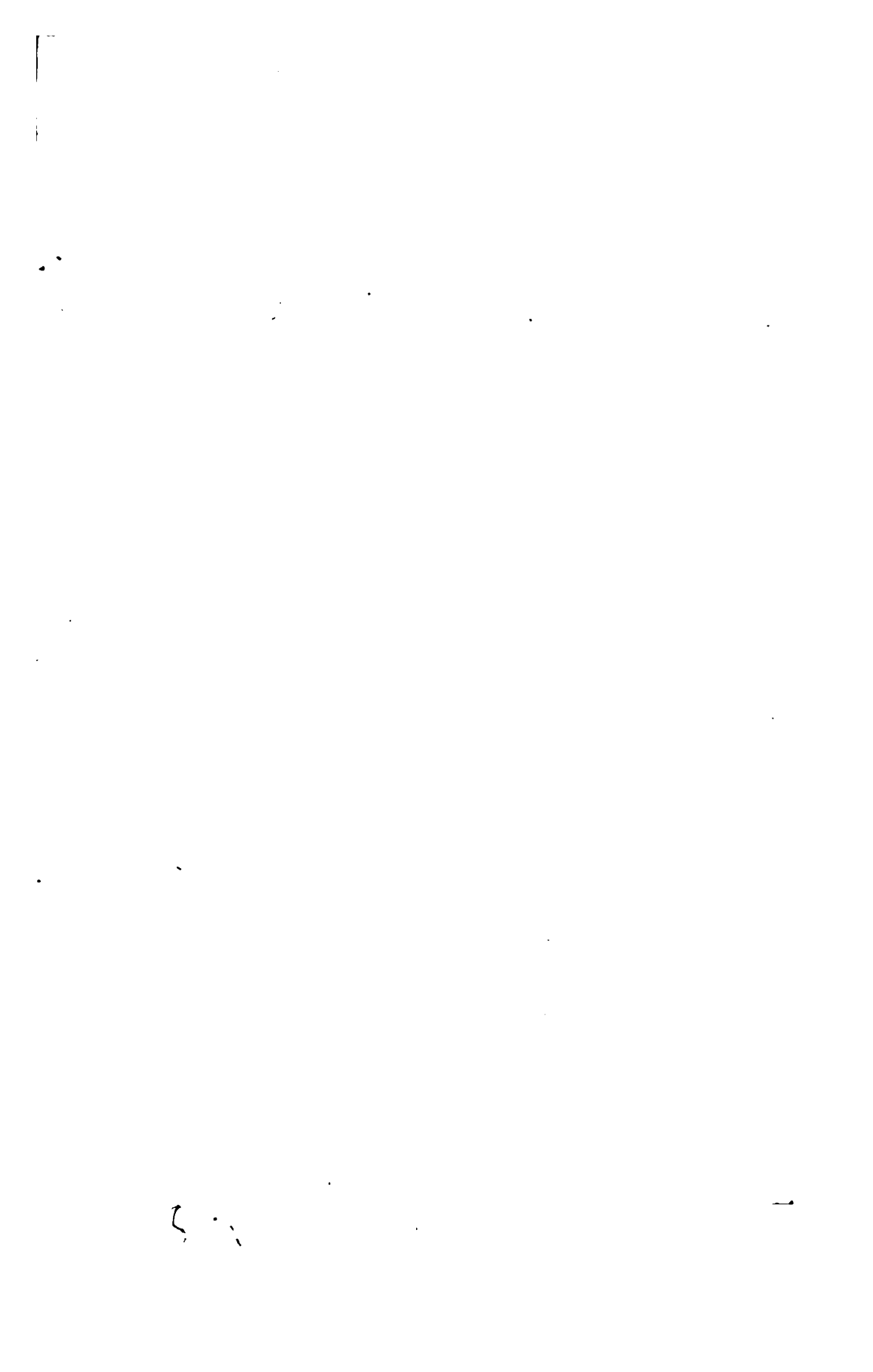
within us to bless thy holy name. We call on all around and all above us to join in the holy song. Praise him all ye his works.

“Speak, ye who best can tell, ye sons of light,  
 Angels; for ye behold him, and with songs  
 And choral symphonies, day without night  
 Circle his throne, rejoicing; ye in heaven,  
 On earth, join all ye creatures to extol  
 Him first, him last, him midst, and without end.  
 Thou Sun, of this great world both eye and soul,  
 Acknowledge him thy greater, sound his praise  
 In thy eternal course.——  
 Air, and ye elements, let your ceaseless change  
 Vary to your great Maker still new praise.  
 His praise, ye winds, that from four quarters blow,  
 Breathe soft or loud; and wave your tops, ye pines,  
 With every plant in sign of worship wave.  
 Fountains, and ye that warble, as ye flow,  
 Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.  
 —— Ye birds,  
 That singing up to heaven's gate ascend,  
 Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise.  
 Join voices all, ye living souls.”

Praise him ye his saints. Praise him all ye people. Praise God in his sanctuary. Praise him for his mighty acts. Praise him according to his excellent greatness. Praise him with the sound of the trumpet. Praise him with the psaltery and harp. Praise him with the stringed instruments and organs. Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord, O my soul. Hallelujah. Hallelujah to our God. Hallelujah for ever and ever. Amen.











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